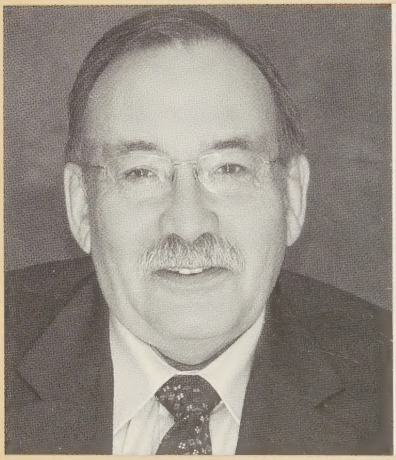
University of Alberta Library
0 1620 3311137 6

LIBRARY OF THE
JUNIORATE
OF ST. JOHN THE APOSTLE.



UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
LIBRARIES

Gift of Ernie Ingles
University of Alberta
Chief Librarian
1990-2012

Bibliothèque
du
COLLÈGE [illegible]N,
84[illegible] [illegible]
Edition[illegible] [illegible]ités,
Section: K
Rayon: 5

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2024

https://archive.org/details/sirwilfridlaurie0001jswi

Bibliothèque
du
COLLÈGE ST-JEAN,
Section: K
Rayon: 5

SIR WILFRID LAURIER AND THE LIBERAL PARTY

ÉLAGUÉ
BIBLIO-FSJ
BIBLIOTHEQUE
du
COLLEGE SAINT-JEAN
EDMONTON ALBERTA

Wilfrid Laurier

SIR WILFRID LAURIER

AND THE

LIBERAL PARTY

2529

A POLITICAL HISTORY

BY J. S. WILLISON

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I

TORONTO
GEORGE N. MORANG AND COMPANY LIMITED
1903

First Edition, May, 1903
Second Edition, October, 1903

Entered according to the Act of the Parliament of Canada in the year one thousand nine hundred and three, by GEORGE N. MORANG AND COMPANY, LIMITED, in the Department of Agriculture.

Murray Printing Company, Toronto

UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

F
5021
L38
W7
T1
C1

2529

AUTHOR'S NOTE

IN the preparation of this work the writer received material assistance from Mr. John S. MacLean, correspondent of the Toronto *Globe* at Montreal, who spent many laborious hours in examining the files of the French papers in the Library of the Fraser Institute. He is likewise indebted to Mr. W. H. Dickson, *The Globe's* resident correspondent at Ottawa, for similar useful and necessary work in the Library of Parliament. He has also to thank Mr. John A. Ewan of *The Globe's* editorial staff, and Mr. A. H. U. Colquhoun, former chief editor of the Toronto *Empire*, for books and pamphlets loaned from their private libraries. He is further indebted to Mr. Colquhoun for the preparation of the Index; and under obligation to Mr. Avern Pardoe, Librarian of the Legislative Assembly at Toronto, and the officials of the Toronto Public Library for access to newspaper files, blue books, and parliamentary papers.

It can hardly be necessary to add that Sir Wilfrid Laurier had nothing to do with the preparation of these volumes, and has no responsibility for the material collected by the writer, for the manner of its presentation, or for the opinions expressed.

J. S. W.

TORONTO, *June, 1902.*

CONTENTS

Vol. I

CHAPTER I

THE LIBERAL PARTY 1

CHAPTER II

THE STUDENT AND THE INSTITUTE . . 27

CHAPTER III

THE CHURCH AND THE PRINTER . . 53

CHAPTER IV

QUEBEC AT THE UNION . . . 77

CHAPTER V

IN LAW AND IN JOURNALISM . . . 99

CHAPTER VI

IN TWO PARLIAMENTS . . . 129

CHAPTER VII

THE RED RIVER TROUBLES . . . 151

CHAPTER VIII

THE AMNESTY 187

CONTENTS

VOL. I—*Continued*

CHAPTER IX

IN THE MACKENZIE ADMINISTRATION . . 211

CHAPTER X

THE CHURCH AND THE STATE . . 253

CHAPTER XI

THE PRIEST IN POLITICS . . . 287

CHAPTER XII

POLITICAL LIBERALISM . . . 315

CHAPTER XIII

IN OPPOSITION 349

CHAPTER XIV

THE PACIFIC RAILWAY . . . 369

CHAPTER XV

THE BATTLE FOR PROVINCIAL RIGHTS . . 409

CHAPTER XVI

THE NORTH-WEST REBELLION . . 427

LIBRARY OF THE
JUNIORATE
OF ST. JOHN THE APOSTLE

CHAPTER 1

THE LIBERAL PARTY

WE may find the sources of the Liberal party of Canada in the eager enthusiasm and the heroic purpose of William Lyon Mackenzie; the fiery genius and fervent radicalism of Papineau; the saner counsels and more responsible statesmanship of Baldwin and Lafontaine; the reforming zeal and splendid optimism of George Brown; the intellectual dominance of Edward Blake; the constitutional prescience of Oliver Mowat; and the sympathetic and sagacious nationalism of Wilfrid Laurier. Holton and Dorion, if we except the issue of Confederation, were likewise consolidating and unifying forces in the creation of the Liberal party; and Alexander Mackenzie had a zeal for reform equal to that of Brown, and a prudence in days of stress and storm which the great journalist did not possess in equal measure. Many other men also have honourable fame in the Reform party, but these are the names that history will preserve.

No doubt the character of the Canadian party was also determined in some measure by the traditions and the tendencies of British Liberalism. But it is hard to fit an old world policy to new world conditions, and since the great battle for

responsible government was fought out both in the British Islands and in the North American Provinces, it can hardly be said that the Liberals of Canada and of Great Britain have had a common programme. To-day, it may be, the policy of the Canadian Liberal party is more esteemed by Mr. Balfour and his colleagues than by the official chiefs of British Liberalism. It was not quite so during the great and luminous era of Gladstone. It would not be quite so if Lord Rosebery were restored to the leadership of the British Liberal party. Lord Rosebery peculiarly and pre-eminently typifies the newer imperial spirit of the Liberal party of Canada. In his utterances there is that sympathetic quality, and in his attitude that sense of identity with the common people which must always distinguish genuine Liberalism.

No one now disputes that William Lyon Mackenzie and the Reformers of 1837 fought to put down intolerable evils. The argument that constitutional agitation would surely have achieved the reforms that were finally conceded to tumult and revolt, has been advanced in mitigation of every abuse that has bred riot and rebellion among British freemen. It may be that Mackenzie was impetuous and turbulent, but the Rebellion of 1837 was at best a pitiful expression of the discontent which the greed and the oppression of the Family Compact had developed. Too much has been said of the rash counsels and unhappy adventures of Mackenzie, and

too little of the crying grievances which an insolent and autocratic Executive would not redress, and of the privileges they were resolved to maintain. It is in such fashion that the decisive blow has been dealt to tyranny and privilege all down the splendid centuries of British history; and if in the story of Liberalism in all countries there are wild and sanguinary chapters, it is because only in that way could popular government be established and perpetuated.

The main achievements of Mackenzie and his associates were to subject the Executive to the control of Parliament and the people, to drive out of the Council the nominees of the Governor, and to impose substantial checks upon presumptuous imperial interference in the domestic affairs of the Canadas. In the green days of his strength, and through the hard season of conflict, Mackenzie bore himself bravely, steadily, and resolutely. Then came the rash advocacy of constitutional changes, which alienated public sympathy and discredited the cause of the reformers; heartbreaking days of exile; vagrant and abortive effort in visionary and impracticable causes; and, at last, return in shattered health to the land he had loved and served so well, but which in the meantime had outgrown the temper of revolt, and had not passed into the mood of gratitude.

But the work of reform was not to go back. The sceptre of leadership had passed into even stronger

and more resolute hands. George Brown had come, and with George Brown the golden age of Liberalism in Canada. It was the fortune of this great figure in Canadian history to submit to exclusion from office throughout almost the whole of his strenuous and fruitful public career. Nor could it well be otherwise. George Brown was a reformer, an agitator, and a journalist. All history proves that office dulls the zeal for reform, and there is an inevitable conflict between the function of the journalist and the function of the minister. Fox was a reformer, and he hardly knew the taste of office. Cobden was a reformer, and he held no portfolio. Bright's official days were few and full of trouble. It was not the agitators for freedom in the United States who formed the cabinets at Washington. Seward, before the hour was ripe, proclaimed the "higher law than the Constitution," and Lincoln became President. Gladstone among British statesmen furnishes an exceptional example of political leadership, as eager and as daring under the yoke of office as under the easier conditions of opposition, and Cleveland in America was not quite silenced by the cares and exigencies of place-holding, place-making, and place-filling. But, in the main, the battle for reform has been waged by the unchained spirits who could not submit their necks to official harness, or were too restless, too strenuous, or too obnoxious to great social or great commercial interests to be admitted to cabinets.

George Brown loved to deal sturdy blows. He loved to fight hand to hand and face to face. He had no heart for the defensive, and cared nothing for power except to achieve reforms, and nothing for place except as a point of advantage from which to strike down abuses and ameliorate unsatisfactory conditions. It would be probably too much to say that, like Cobden, he had never the desire for office. There is reason to believe that there were times when he felt strongly that it was essential to the complete success of the measures he had at heart that he should fashion the legislation and control the administration of affairs. He was hurt and angered by the shifty and double-faced methods adopted to strangle the Brown-Dorion Ministry at its birth, and, it may be, was persuaded that he should have had a controlling voice, if not the first place, in the Cabinet which organized Confederation. In the first case his anger was just, and in the second his expectations were not unreasonable. If not the chief architect, he was at least the chief missioner of Confederation.

Sir John Macdonald, on the other hand, was rather the political beneficiary of the labours of men who had made Confederation a dominant issue before he set resolute hands to the movement. He was sympathetic at heart, he was in touch with the British North American League which organized in 1849 to resist the annexationists, he gave nominal

assent to the arguments of academic unionists, and the Cartier-Macdonald Government of 1858 feebly countenanced the project. But, like many another politician, he preferred to govern under established conditions rather than risk the loss of office by the premature adoption of a revolutionary policy, while in view of his Quebec alliances there was clear political gain in resisting the Brown school of federalists. Wary as always, adroit, surefooted and sagacious, he did not adopt the child until it was well grown, and he then bulked larger at its side than the men who had nursed it from infancy. Such had been the attitude and action of Peel on Catholic Emancipation, and the Repeal of the Corn Laws, and the part was not discreditable to him; nor do we, in emphasizing the patient and judicious growth of Sir John Macdonald's attachment to the cause of Confederation, mean to deny his great services in the accomplishment of the union of the Canadian provinces. But when history deals with Catholic Emancipation it does not forget Canning, and Grey, and O'Connell; nor has the mighty, unfaltering, irresistible campaign of Bright and Cobden against the evils and exactions of the old mercantile system been overshadowed by Peel's parliamentary services to Free Trade. So, when we estimate the forces which accomplished the union of the Canadian provinces, we do well to remember Macdonald, and Cartier, and Tupper, but we do far from well if we forget Brown, and Galt, and Howe, and

Morris, and McGee, and Cauchon, and Johnson, and Uniacke.

If it be true, as Mr. Goldwin Smith has said, that Confederation was the child of political deadlock, then George Brown was responsible for the deadlock.[1] In that very fact we perhaps discover why the Liberal leader was not the first Prime Minister of Canada. In the prosecution of the work he found to do, he had fought long and hard, always with a sweeping arm and along a straight path, and so had antagonized influential elements of the population and bred enmities on every side. He was dreaded by the timid brood of compromisers in his own party, and hated by powerful political opponents whom he had hunted with unsparing vigour.

At least four great measures are inseparably associated with the name and fame of George Brown: (1) the abolition of the clergy reserves, (2) representation by population, (3) the federation of the Canadian provinces, and (4) the incorporation of the North-West Territories into the new commonwealth. In one of these propositions considerations of clerical privilege were directly involved, and racial and sectarian issues arose in the contest for representation by population, and in the movement for Confederation. The question of separate schools was also an abiding issue in many of the political contests which preceded Confederation, as it has appeared in contests in many of the provinces and

[1] "Canada and the Canadian Question," by Goldwin Smith, page 143.

even in national elections since the union. George Brown had no toleration for privilege, social, racial, or clerical. He was a determined opponent of the separate school system, and had little consideration for the racial sensitiveness of Quebec. Hence he was often in open and deadly quarrel with the Roman Catholic hierarchy, a sleepless political force in all countries; and in the long struggle for representation by population, as a means of escape from the system under which the local affairs of Upper Canada were controlled by an administration maintained in office by the vote of Quebec, Mr. Brown said many things which the French province bitterly resented, and did not readily forget.[1] It seemed for long as though Mr. Brown had made the Catholic ecclesiastics and the French-speaking people the perpetual allies of the Conservative leaders, and it is certain that, to the end of his days, Sir John Macdonald

[1] In his address to the electors of the united counties of Kent and Lambton, in 1851, George Brown advocated total separation of Church and State as the foundation of the political structure of Reformers; diverting the clergy reserves to the support of national common schools, abolishing the rectories by Act of Parliament, and restoring the land to the people; national education; abolition of all money grants for sectarian purposes; placing all ecclesiastical corporations under one general act, and clergymen on an equal footing as to the celebration of matrimony; parliamentary representation by population; extension of the franchise; free commercial intercourse on a footing of reciprocity between Canada and the United States, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and the West India Islands; development of internal water communications and throwing them open to all nations on the payment of moderate tolls; and a trunk line of railway through Upper Canada, westward from Quebec, with termini at Windsor and Port Sarnia.

profited by the antagonisms which Mr. Brown had created among the Roman Catholic and French elements of the population.

To the people of Quebec there was a suspicion of indecent haste in the demand for representation by population. When Upper and Lower Canada were united in 1841, the population of Quebec was 661,000, while that of the English province was but 486,000. Quebec, however, submitted to equality of representation in the Parliament of United Canada, and thus made possible a union which could hardly have been effected if Upper Canada had been required to accept a position of inferiority in the common Legislature.[1] What was known as the double majority also came to be recognized as necessary to the preservation of good relations between the two provinces, and the harmonious and effective working of the machinery of government. The rule of the double majority required that a government should have the support of at least one-half of the representatives from both Upper

[1] In the Report on the Affairs of British North America, Lord Durham said: "With respect to every one of those plans which propose to make the English minority an electoral majority by means of new and strange modes of voting, or unfair divisions of the country, I shall only say, that if the Canadians are to be deprived of representative government, it would be better to do it in a straightforward way, than to attempt to establish a permanent system of government on the basis of what all mankind would regard as mere electoral frauds. It is not in North America that men can be cheated by an unreal semblance of representative government, or persuaded that they are out-voted, when, in fact, they are disfranchised."

and Lower Canada, and must resign or appeal to the country in case of failure to command a majority in either province, no matter how overwhelming might be its support in the other province, nor how substantial its majority in a full Parliament. We can easily imagine how precarious was the tenure of administrations, and how difficult the work of government under such conditions, and how such a question as the organization of a separate school system for Upper Canada must rend the two communities apart and arouse passions and prejudices utterly destructive of the public peace, and wholly fatal to all good understanding between the French and English sections.

It was to end these mischievous conflicts and to secure the balance of power for Upper Canada, that Brown urged his demand for representation by population, and it was in order to checkmate the Liberal leader that John A. Macdonald and George E. Cartier abandoned the principle of the double majority, and undertook to govern in defiance of the dominant sentiment of the larger province and the votes of a decisive majority of its representatives. It was vain to argue that the device of the double majority was no part of the compact of union, and, in fact, was inoperative in practical government, as the Liberals finally discovered; and it was just as useless to insist that Quebec had accepted equality of representation while that province had the larger population, and therefore Upper Canada

could not fairly stand out for concessions which the Lower Province under like circumstances had not exacted. Party feeling ran high, racial and sectarian passions were roused, the language of press and platform was bitter and intemperate, and the Queen's government could hardly be carried on. At last it became manifest to the leaders of public opinion, in both Upper and Lower Canada, that only by a federation of the Canadian provinces and more elastic constitutional machinery could the deadlock be broken, and stable conditions of government be re-established. George Brown had forced a situation from which there was no escape except by the adoption of his policy—the organization of a federal commonwealth and representation by population.

It was not Mr. Brown who first saw the vision of federation, and it may be that he contended for the principle of federalism rather than for the organization of a British confederacy in North America. But he probably saw that a federal union of Upper and Lower Canada would provide the only enduring basis upon which the wider confederation could be established; and while his first object was to destroy the grave abuses imbedded in the old system, and apply the federal principle to the two Canadas, still no other man contributed so mightily to the final result, even though at times his stormy advocacy seemed to make for disunion and disruption. In 1858 he wrote of Confederation as a desirable, but remote event. In

1859 he persuaded a great Liberal convention held in Toronto to declare for the principle of federalism. In 1864 he presented to Parliament a report from a committee on constitutional changes in favour of the federative system for Upper and Lower Canada, or for the whole of British North America, if the wider union could be accomplished. This report was resisted by Mr. Macdonald, but it formed the basis of the negotiations for the coalition; and although Brown sought to make a federal union of Upper and Lower Canada the prime object of the coalition, he finally accepted from Galt and Macdonald the larger scheme of Confederation as an immediate policy, and sacrificed old and dearly cherished political alliances in order to carry the great project to success. He, more than any other man, exposed and established the impotency of the old legislative arrangement, and he, more than any other man, now stimulated expectations of larger national life, and happier national conditions from the projected union of the British American communities.

It is true that the demand for representation by population involved the violation of a constitutional compact. Nothing is clearer than that equal representation for each province was the vital feature of the union agreement between Upper and Lower Canada, and it is not surprising that Quebec, which accepted equality of representation when it had the larger population, should resent

the attempt to change the very basis of the compact just as soon as the population of Upper Canada outgrew that of the sister province. The English-speaking community would not submit even temporarily to the rule of a Quebec majority, nor was it to be expected that Quebec would consent to grant the Upper Province an increase of representation, and accept a position of permanent inferiority in the united Parliament.

Mr. Brown was met by the appeal to good faith, and overborne by the argument from the constitutional standpoint. While it is now manifest that he offered the only practical solution for the difficulties which had developed, and which were bound to develop, from the changing conditions of the country and the delicate texture of many local issues, it is well to remember that in the scheme for the union of Upper and Lower Canada, as in the later and larger plan of Confederation, Quebec displayed an admirable temper, and accepted actual loss of political power and actual impairment of political prestige in order to promote the organization of a Canadian commonwealth. Those among us who regard Quebec as a province apart from its neighbours, a separate French community set down among British states, must admit that with every extension of the bounds of Confederation, with every new province added to the Dominion, Quebec has sustained proportionate loss of power and influence, has borne the loss with dignity, and has

sprung always with patriotic ardour to the new tasks of larger empire.

The legislative union of 1841 could not endure. From the first the seeds of dissolution were in the terms of the compact. It was inevitable that as Upper Canada increased in population it would demand increased representation, as Quebec sooner or later would have demanded increased representation if that province had shown the greater growth of population. It was impossible, moreover, for a common Parliament to handle many of the local issues that were bound to arise in a country half French and half English, half Catholic and half Protestant, with each community very much of a compact body, occupying its own territory and separated by a central line of division. No constitutional compact can long survive a growth of adverse opinion. There was no future for united Canada except dissolution, or evolution into some such larger union as the leaders of the Confederation movement proposed. Mr. Brown forced this conclusion upon the country, and forever took his place among the great constructive statesmen of North America. The Liberal leader established the necessity for Confederation, the Conservative leader accepted the situation which his great opponent had created, and Brown and Macdonald joined hands to effect the union.[1]

[1] In his letter of March 9th, 1871, to a committee acting on behalf of a meeting of prominent Catholics from all sections of Ontario, Mr.

Mr. Brown had to make surrender and sacrifice in order to enter the Coalition Cabinet. We shall not find in our history any larger act of patriotism. It was, in fact, due mainly to very earnest and persistent pressure from Lord Monck that he at last agreed to countenance the coalition. It was easier for Macdonald to coalesce with Brown than for Brown to unite with Macdonald. The Conservative leader had an administrative record which Mr. Brown had opposed at well nigh every step and in almost every detail. He had declared with equal emphasis his want of confidence in the man and in his public policy, and if his words were to be taken at their face value, Mr. Macdonald should have been excluded from all cabinets, and from all share

Brown said: "Need I remind you how, year after year, the Reform party stuck to their great purpose; and how, at last, by a party sacrifice having few parallels in party history, they won for the people of Upper Canada—Protestant and Catholic alike—that great measure of justice embodied in the Act of 1867. Under that Act the people of Ontario enjoy representation according to population; they have entire control over their own local affairs; and the last remnant of the sectarian warfare the Separate School question—was settled forever by a compromise that was accepted as final by all parties concerned. I deny not that in this protracted contest words were spoken and lines were penned that had been better clothed in more courteous guise. But when men go to war they are apt to take their gloves off; and assuredly if one side struck hard blows, the other was not slow in returning them. And looking back on the whole contest, and the ends it has already accomplished, I do think every dispassionate person must confess that had the battle been ten times fiercer than it was, and the words spoken ten times more bitter than they were, the triumphant success that has attended the long agitation would have sunk all the evils attending it into utter insignificance. We have obtained our just share in the administration of the affairs of the Dominion; we have

in the government of the country. To unite with this man for the performance of a great act of constructive statesmanship was to recognize his commanding influence and to admit his fitness for participation in great events. We are not concerned to justify Mr. Brown's estimate of his brilliant and resourceful opponent. Those were days of hard and bitter controversy, and Mr. Brown gave at least as much justice as he received. There can be no doubt that he was resolutely opposed to Mr. Macdonald's political methods and to many features of his public policy, and that to a man of Mr. Brown's downright sincerity and profoundly earnest temperament, Mr. Macdonald's easy humour and rare arts of political management were thoroughly distasteful. Not the less so, perhaps, because

obtained exclusive control over our provincial affairs; we have banished sectarian discord from our legislative and executive chambers; and we enjoy a degree of material prosperity, and have a degree of consideration for the religious views and feelings of each other, that no living man ever witnessed in Canada till now. I claim that to accomplish these great ends was, all through our agitation, the avowed object for which we fought. I claim that the principles involved in our agitation were precisely those that the Catholics of Canada held and firmly contended for in the olden time when they worked cordially in the Liberal ranks. I repeat my conviction that, had it not been for the intrusion of French Canadian dictation in our affairs, the Reform party might have remained intact until this day. And I ask those of you who can do so, to carry your minds back to the position held by Catholics in times gone by, and say whether any other section of the people of Upper Canada has such good reason to rejoice in the banishment of sectarian issues from the political arena, and the perfect equality of all denominations now so firmly and so happily enjoyed, as have the Catholics of Ontario."

the man and his methods were so tremendously successful. Mr. Brown must have known, too, that such political unions are seldom happy, are soon terminated, and generally bring loss to the more scrupulous partners in the compact. But at least the coalition brought Confederation to birth, and that was worth all of labour and of sacrifice that was entailed upon its members.

It was inevitable that Mr. Brown's ministerial association with Mr. Macdonald should be brief and unsatisfactory. He could not occupy a subordinate position to the Conservative leader. There can be hardly any doubt that such was his position in the Coalition Ministry. There is a tradition among Liberals that if Brown had chosen to lead a movement against Macdonald, he could have dethroned the Conservative chief. When his resignation was offered, advances to this end were made to the Liberal leader by a powerful group of his colleagues; and that Galt and Cartier were active leaders in this movement seems to be certain, despite the absence of documentary evidence.

Neither in political craft nor in the management of men was Brown the equal of Macdonald. The one was patient, shrewd, and insinuating; the other blunt, outspoken, and aggressive. The one was concerned to buttress his position, solidify his forces, and bring recruits to his camp by all the arts of a persuasive personality and a positive genius for party generalship. The other hardly looked for

sources of strength outside of the measures he advocated, and the arguments he addressed to the country and to Parliament. It is true that Mr. Brown knew the value of party organization, and, if we do not mistake, could connive at arguments in a campaign that were not presented from the housetops, and found lodgment in the voter's pocket rather than in his intellect. It would be sheer cant to pretend that the electoral practices of the Liberal party, under Mr. Brown's leadership, were faultless, and that he was superior to all the methods of the practical politician. It is also true that he had a vigilant eye for rising talent in the ranks of his party. No man ever knew Ontario better than George Brown, not even Sir John Macdonald or Sir Oliver Mowat. He searched every corner of the province for candidates. He knew the tendencies, sympathies, and prejudices of every constituency. He knew who might win here, and who must fail there. He understood the enormous value of strong candidates, and knew how the best cause could be wrecked by bad work at the party conventions. Lacking the softer arts of persuasion, he literally drove men into the political field, and inspired the most prudent and indifferent with something of his abounding energy and something of his invincible optimism. But while he could move men in the mass, when he came to deal with men individually he seemed able to work only upon those who were in natural sympathy with his views of public

policy. He had no consideration for shirkers and trimmers. He was hard upon mediocrity, and sometimes mercilessly, and perhaps needlessly, crushed men who aspired to positions for which they were unequal. He would have only loyal comrades. Treachery and ingratitude he counted as the chief of political offences, and he waged no fights so bitter and relentless as those he carried on against men who had used his favour and his strength to climb to high position, and then repudiated the debt they owed, withheld their sympathy and counsel, and consorted with his opponents. He had, in short, none of the arts which Sir John Macdonald so successfully employed to lure the wavering type of politician into his camp. When he struck at a weak or treacherous ally he struck to kill, and without calculation; while Sir John Macdonald could wait for the opportune moment, provide fortuitous provocations to slow suicide, and withhold the fatal blow, until the victim had so exhausted his strength and blundered away his opportunities that he became impotent for mischief and hardly worth the killing.

Nothing in all Sir John Macdonald's remarkable career quite equals his handling of Confederation. He evaded active identification with the movement until it became the dominant issue in the politics of the country. Thenceforward no one was more influential in directing the movement and in settling the terms of the act of union. He saw Mr. Brown

withdraw from the Coalition Cabinet and resign the leadership of the Liberal party. He held Mr. Macdougall and Mr. Howland in the ministry, and thus seriously impaired the unity and effectiveness of the Liberal forces. He made John Sandfield Macdonald his political ally, and established what was practically a Conservative government in the Liberal Province of Ontario. He employed Sandfield Macdonald, an old Liberal and an anti-unionist, to persuade Howe to accept the terms of the union. He emerged from the intrigues, the bargainings, the compromises, the readjustments which the changing conditions of the time invited, and perhaps necessitated, the unquestioned leader of the Conservative party, and the dominating force in the new Confederation.

Mr. Brown, on the other hand, was maimed by his connection with the coalition. Not a few of his Liberal associates foresaw that he would be outmanœuvred by Sir John Macdonald. Mr. Mackenzie boded disaster to the Liberal party from Brown's partnership with the Conservative leader. Holton and Dorion in Quebec were at least conditionally hostile to the Confederation project. Besides, there has always been in the Liberal party a destructive element which looks with suspicion upon new ventures in government, and this element was always restless under the driving optimism and bold constructive statesmanship of George Brown.

For Mr. Brown was essentially an optimist, and

essentially a constructive statesman. With pen and voice he was always planning and building, and he never sought to pull down except with the design of rearing a fairer structure on the ruins. Whether as champion of a great state university, as leader of the movement for Confederation, or as advocate of the acquisition of the West, he was always progressive, hopeful, courageous, and whole-hearted. On many questions he was in advance of public opinion, while he was a thorough journalist in his quick grasp of a situation and profound appreciation of the value of steady, resolute, and aggressive fighting. He never hesitated to risk political loss for a principle or a cause in which his mind and heart were enlisted. He was superior to all mere office-hunting alliances. He was never the mere agent of popular opinion. When dissension was rending and war ravaging the American Republic, the current of feeling, at least in Toronto, set strongly towards the South, and Southern emissaries were held very close to the social heart of the community. But Mr. Brown stood out for the North as boldly even as did Bright and Cobden in England, and we have no better specimens of his formidable logic and fine moral eloquence than the speeches he made in denunciation of the aims and ambitions of the slave-holding confederacy, and in illustration and vindication of the simple verities of humanity, and the elementary truths of human freedom. If the virtue of consistency has high value

in a public career, then few indeed among British statesmen have maintained their course so surely and so steadily as George Brown. It is hardly too much to say that he was reverenced by the Scottish element of the population, and no public journal ever addressed its constituency with more authority than *The Globe* under Mr. Brown's management. He was a platform speaker of remarkable power, exhaustive in detail, logical and direct in method, with a spacious grasp of fact and incident, and with all that infectious enthusiasm which gives the spoken word its strange power over the hearts and minds of men. He had that bold and ready courage which beats the most turbulent audience into submission, and there is no record that he was ever driven from a platform or ever quite silenced by a hostile meeting during all that rough and tumultuous period in our politics which led up to the Confederation settlement.

During the last twelve or fourteen years of his life he held no office of leadership in the Liberal party. But to the end he was influential in determining Liberal policy and held intimate relationships with the official leaders of the party. He probably advised upon all important measures initiated by the Mackenzie Administration, and to the hour of his death was the loyal ally and counsellor of Oliver Mowat. It is understood that he was in complete sympathy with the resolve of Mr. Mackenzie and Sir Richard Cartwright, not to adopt a

protectionist policy, but to increase the revenue tariff from $17\frac{1}{2}$ to 20 per cent., in order to meet the necessities of the treasury in a time of unexampled commercial depression. In fact this policy was foreshadowed in *The Globe* with the full knowledge and concurrence of Mr. Brown, and was reluctantly abandoned in consequence of the representations of the Liberal contingent from the Eastern Provinces that any increase of customs taxation would be fatal to Liberal candidates in the Maritime constituencies.[1] The suspicion that

[1] *The Globe* on February 7th, 1876, said: "No one proposes to abolish our custom houses, or to fall back upon direct taxation for all our national revenues. In these circumstances no one can object to our raising that revenue by duties on imported articles, and that very much at our discretion. No one could object to this, and no one will, Britain least of all. If, in order to raise this needed revenue, a tariff of twenty or even twenty-five per cent. were necessary, no one, we suppose, would object to its imposition, though they might regret its necessity. Upon this point there is no diversity of opinion, and no need, therefore, of either argument or discussion. . . . . We have already practically seventeen and a half per cent. protection, which the freight and other charges on foreign goods materially increases. Some very naturally argue that any industry which cannot live and thrive under that amount of protection does not deserve to live. If, however, the fiscal exigencies of the country require more revenue, no one would seriously object to the rate being still further raised. The range, however, within which this can be done to any advantage is very limited. Scarcely any would go further than twenty-five ; while thirty or thirty-five, we should fancy, even our most rabid protectionist would, in any case, think excessive. After all, then, the diversity of sentiment on this tariff business is excessively small. On the one hand, the greatest sticklers for free trade never have objected to a revenue tariff, and as little have they objected to its increase, if, after the most rigid economy has been practised, the credit of the country required it, while they have never fixed upon a maximum tariff

there was ever any open quarrel or even any general lack of sympathy between Mr. Brown and Mr. Edward Blake does not seem to be well founded. Mr. Blake was not inferior to Mr. Brown in intellectual calibre, while they were quite dissimilar in temperament, and very likely to seek common ends by different methods. It is too much to expect that either of two such men could be quite the echo of the other, particularly when we remember that each had a resolute strain of independence, and each the temper of leadership. If we do not mistake, Mr. Brown was profoundly conscious of Mr. Blake's remarkable ability, and largely instrumental in persuading the great advocate to embark upon a public career. Mr. Brown and *The Globe* were just as loyal to the Blake Administration in Ontario as to the Mackenzie Government at Ottawa, and Mr. Brown's counsel was as sympathetically received and as solidly considered by the leader of the provincial Cabinet as by the chief of the federal Ministry.[1]

for any supposable circumstances. On the other hand, their opponents are shy about even mentioning taxation at all for purely protectionist reasons, while even at the worst they would never venture on more than two or three per cent. higher than what those whom they are continually denouncing as free traders are very willing to acquiesce in, if the national obligations make it necessary." On February 15th, *The Globe* added : "No one in Canada, any more than in England, has any desire to prevent our revenue tariff from affording such incidental protection to manufacturers as it can be made to afford without injuring it for revenue purposes."

[1] In his letter of 1871, to the Roman Catholic Committee, George

No one would suppose, however, that absolute identity of opinion often exists among a group of opposition leaders, or even among members of the same cabinet. There must be differences of view, discussion, surrender, and compromise. There need not be disloyalty or intrigue. The collective wisdom must determine the final policy, and to secure the triumph of that policy the zeal and the energy of all must be applied. This is a necessary condition of the party system, certainly a necessary condition of the cabinet system. It is well that the secrets of council are not often unveiled, and that historical inquiry should not degenerate into mere curiosity. Of course neither a leader of opposition nor a cabinet minister is bound to accept a policy which his judgment and his conscience condemn. His only legitimate alternative, however, is open repudiation of the policy and frank appeal to the judgment and conscience of the country. This was Mr. Brown's course on more than one occasion, and here is the best evidence that he had no reverence for party except as an instrument of reform, and that he ranked progressive measures far above stagnant office-holding.

Brown said : "At the convention of 1867, I voluntarily resigned the leadership of that (Liberal) party, and have not since then taken any action in that capacity. Mr. Alexander Mackenzie is now leader of the Liberal party from Ontario in the House of Commons, and Mr. Edward Blake is leader in the Ontario Assembly ; they have my most cordial confidence and support, and to them I refer you for an official answer to your questions."

But while Mr. Brown was sometimes a restless and uncomfortable political yoke-fellow, he never stooped to treachery or intrigue, and he was resolutely faithful to accepted co-workers in the great movements in which he was concerned. The passion of jealousy he never knew. He cared not how high men towered at his side, so long as they did not betray the reforms that were dear to him, in order to make more profitable alliances and step obliquely into office and emoluments. He was, in short, a simple, candid, loyal comrade, a bold reformer, an eager and even tempestuous agitator, a statesman in scope and vision, an unwavering champion of British connection and British institutions, and in his life and achievements are set deep the roots of Canadian Liberalism. In undertaking a study of the work and character of the present leader of the Liberal party, it has seemed necessary to make this historical survey in order that we may better understand the traditions to which he must appeal, the prejudices he must respect or overcome, the forces he must unite, the elements he must conciliate, if he is to establish and maintain the Liberal party as a ruling party and give the country orderly, stable, and progressive government.

CHAPTER II

THE STUDENT AND THE INSTITUTE

ALL down the generations the green and quiet country has been the nursery of poets, philosophers, and statesmen. It is there that men have room to grow and time to think. There is comfort and serenity in the open sky, the wide field, and the strip of bush, and a spacious leisure in the long, slow days, and solemn brooding nights. All there is of divinity in man ripens under such conditions, and the elemental simplicities and austerities of life breed in him high resolves and large ambitions. If we examine the rolls of the great public schools and universities, we shall find that very many of the leaders in the class-lists have come up from rural homes, and were reared perhaps in grievous circumstances. So we shall find it in the professions, in the churches, in the parliaments, in great commercial and financial enterprises. The roar and clamour of cities seem to produce diffusion and distraction. Social duties and social ambitions take the best out of lives that under the steadier conditions which prevail in rural communities, would have been deeper and fuller and richer in human service. How much of the strength and sanity of British statesmanship is the product of quiet English fields

BIBLIOTHEQUE
du

and wide ancestral estates! For generations the spirit of rural New England was the moral force of the American Republic. The rugged hills and bleak moors of Scotland are the nursing mothers of immortals. Lincoln's wide vision and infinite patience and high fortitude were caught, perhaps, from the spreading prairies and enduring hills of the West. We may not say that it is the fashion of the gods to rear their great ones in the silences of the plains and hills. But there is at least a half-truth in the thought that greatness feeds on isolation, and there is something in the near presence of infinite nature which begets enduring purpose and indomitable ambitions.

It was the fortune of Wilfrid Laurier to be born in a rural home, set in a quiet land, and if we would know the man we must remember his early surroundings, and recall his later years of serene companionship with nature and with books. He was born on November 20th, 1841, at St. Lin, in the County of L'Assomption. His father was a land surveyor, and his grandfather a farmer, with a strong inclination for the study of mathematics and technical science. His mother was Marcelle Martineau, of L'Assomption, who died when he was four years old. She was a woman of rare gifts, with a taste for art and a natural talent for drawing and designing. His father afterwards married Odeline Ethier, who had been nurse in the family. She had not the gifts of Mr. Laurier's mother, but was

a kind, helpful, simple-hearted woman, and was greatly beloved by Wilfrid and his sister, who died in her early girlhood. Three sons were born of his father's second marriage. One became a physician, and died in 1898. Two survive: Charlemagne, a merchant at St. Lin, and member of the Commons for the county, and Henri, who is prothonotary at Arthabaskaville. His father died twenty years ago, and left practically nothing for the family. Land surveying was not a remunerative profession, nor was his father of a saving disposition. Still, he maintained his eldest son for seven years at L'Assomption College, as well as during his law course at Montreal.

In so far as Mr. Laurier represents inherited qualities, we may look for scientific and mathematical susceptibilities from the father, and for grace and art from the mother. Both parents had the gracious manner and wholesome simplicity of character which so beautifully distinguish the best stock of the rural parishes of Quebec. The marks of a happy childhood, the look that is caught at a mother's knee, never quite pass from the human face, and the face of Mr. Laurier in his softer moods suggests that the home in which he was reared was a centre of all the domestic affections, and of all the sweet courtesies of sympathetic family intercourse. He still makes an annual pilgrimage to the old home at St. Lin, and cherishes an unfailing affection for the aged stepmother. He has not

allowed the increasing duties and responsibilities of public life to lessen his concern for her welfare, and has never neglected the frequent visits in which she delights, and which are among his chief pleasures. He has likewise manifested an abiding interest in the fortunes of his half-brothers, and altogether has shown an admirable sense of the obligations, and a keen appreciation of the intimacies of family relationship.

He first attended the elementary school of his native parish, and then from September, 1853, to June, 1854, was a pupil of the Protestant elementary school at New Glasgow. This village is eighteen miles distant from St. Lin, and his chief object in attending the Protestant school there was to learn the rudiments of English. He boarded with an Irish Catholic family named Kirk, and often visited that of Mr. John Murray, a great friend of his father, who kept a general store in the village. In his leisure hours he served behind the counter of Murray's store, not for any salary, but simply to improve his English by conversing with the customers. Mr. Murray was a strict Scotch Presbyterian, an elder in the church, and had been educated for the Presbyterian ministry. He and his family seem to have been greatly attracted by the schoolboy, who was made a welcome visitor in the household. Mr. Laurier still cherishes memories of his school life at New Glasgow, and in his reminiscent moods seems to dwell almost fondly upon

the various physical encounters he had with the Scotch boys of the village. The fact that Laurier's father thus sent the boy from home to learn English would suggest that he saw in the son early promise of his brilliant qualities, and had sagaciously and correctly estimated the value of English, even as a mere commercial asset. There seems reason to think that the boy's experiences at New Glasgow had a distinct and lasting effect upon his character and opinions. Many years afterwards he was asked how it came that he was so tolerant of the religious beliefs of Protestants. In reply, he told the story of his relations with the family of John Murray, and added, "The pure family life and the godly conduct of the Murrays so impressed me that I am convinced a Protestant can be an earnest, true Christian, as well as a Catholic."

In September, 1854, at twelve years of age, he entered L'Assomption College, and for the next seven years was in the hands of its professors. The curriculum embraced a very complete course in Latin, less Greek, and still less English; a complete course in French literature; history, geography, mathematics, and mental philosophy.

The young Laurier seems from the first to have excited the special interest of his school-fellows; and if we may judge by later utterances, more than one of his classmates saw unmistakable promise of what the future would reveal, in the easy self-discipline, the serious purpose, and the mature

gravity, which distinguished the youthful student. Mr. Arthur Dansereau, one of the most accomplished of Quebec journalists, and a political opponent of Mr. Laurier, wrote some years ago, "the very appearance of Wilfrid Laurier indicated his future, and for all those who knew him his success has never been a surprise." The political atmosphere of L'Assomption College, as of most Catholic schools in Quebec at that day, was Conservative, but Mr. Dansereau declares that "Wilfrid Laurier at sixteen exercised a veritable domination within the walls of this institution, which, however, did not share his political ideas." He concedes that the great majority of the professors and students were pronounced and even aggressive Conservatives, but adds that in spite of this violent current which arose in a classical college as in the real arena of militant politics, Wilfrid Laurier always held the first rank in debate and controversy. We are told that "his words, sincere, clear and eloquent, imposed respect and commanded respect, even in the most passionate." He was, too, "the most popular pupil, the pupil with the greatest following and the most influence." His ascendancy, however, was purely the ascendancy of character and of intellect. It seems that he rarely took part in the college games, and neither then nor later was he attracted by field sports or athletic contests. When it is remembered, however, that he was by no means robust, and that in fact up to middle life his health

was a constant source of concern to his family and his friends, we can understand why he was more conspicuous in the school-room than on the play-ground. In the words of his fellow-pupil, from whom we have been quoting, "He was then, as to-day, calm, dignified, reserved, almost timid. But happy were they who formed the circle around him to know the charm of his words so musical, vibrant, grasping, his conversation always lofty, instructive and penetrating."

Wilfrid Laurier's feet turned in early youth towards the law courts and the hustings. We have it on the authority of Mr. L. O. David that the student was punished more than once for going without permission to hear cases argued in the village court-house, or to listen to the orators at some political meeting.[1] But it was seldom, indeed, that he needed to be disciplined. He was a first-rate student, and he had something of that love for the classics which distinguishes the scholar rather than the man of affairs. We can easily imagine that if literature in Canada yielded daily bread, Wilfrid Laurier would have been quite as likely to seek a career in literature as in law and politics. But it was the fashion, and is perhaps still the fashion, for the young men of his stamp in Quebec to go into law, and through law into politics; and it is not improbable that Mr. Laurier deliberately adopted law as the more remunerative pursuit, and

[1] "Mes Contemporains," by L. O. David, p. 84.

deliberately intended that the practice of law should lead on to a public career.

In 1861 Mr. Laurier entered the law office of Mr. Rodolphe Laflamme at Montreal. Mr. Laflamme was an advocate of large practice and wide reputation, and a politician of commanding influence in the Montreal district. Perhaps no better opportunity will occur for saying that fourteen years later the young student was his colleague in the Mackenzie Cabinet. Mr. Laurier took the law course at McGill University, and he had so profited from his residence with the Murray family, his term at the English school, and his persistent study of English literature, that he was able to take lectures in both French and English. He was an earnest and laborious student, and throughout the three-year course maintained a good place in the examinations. In his first year, 1861-62, he ranked second in general proficiency and stood well in the respective classes. In the class on Real Estate and Customary Law he was first, and in that on Obligations and General Principles of the Law of Contract, of which Mr. J. J. C. Abbott was professor, he ranked second. In the second year, 1862-63, he did not rank in general proficiency, but in the classes he was second in Bibliography of English and French and Canadian Law, and third in Real Estate and Customary Law. In his third and last year, 1863-64, for the degree of B.C.L., he was first in one class and second in two, and for gen-

eral proficiency was equal with Mr. Henri L. Désaulniers, who stood second. His standing in the respective classes was second in Criminal and Constitutional Law, and first in Customary Law and Law of Real Estate. There were eleven students in the graduating class, and Mr. Laurier stood second. Nothing more is required to establish his standing than the fact that in the first and third years he was second on the aggregate. At graduation he was not only second in general proficiency, but was first in the thesis which had to be written for the degree. He thus became valedictorian, and was required to deliver the address for his class at the convocation of 1864. This was the first speech he ever delivered outside of a college debating club, and in its essential teaching it expresses the spirit and purpose which have animated all his political career.

He argued in this address that the mission of the man of law was to cause justice to reign; to separate the true from the false; to maintain the rights of citizens; to preserve the general peace; to preserve for families the inheritance of their ancestors, for the individual his honour when assailed, and for the public the just repression of offences; to hold within limits the audacity of the powerful, and to relieve the wretchedness of the weak, without violence for the one, and without indulgence to the other; to render to each according to his works. "I know of nothing greater; I

admire the man who on the field of battle knows how to die and save his country; I admire the man who brings all generations under the spell of the creations of his genius; I admire the man who consecrates his whole life to the amelioration of humanity; but I admire him still more who has taken for the end of his life, his studies, and his labours, to render to each according to his works. All glories, all merits pale before these simple and great thoughts: to render to each according to his works, to cause justice to reign." He glanced at the severe training necessary for a profession which, he declared, was more than a mere bread-winner, more than an art, and more than a science, because of the moral obligations it involved. In a free country the places of first importance fall to the men of law. He gave as examples Eldon and Erskine in England; Favre, Ollivier, Billault and Rouher in France. Brougham, he said, began at the foot of the social ladder and ended on the benches of the House of Lords. This could not well be otherwise under the régime of Liberty. "Liberty is not the power to say everything and do everything: Liberty is the right to act and move at ease and without hindrance within the circle of the constitution traced by the people, without which that circle might be enlarged or contracted at will by a despotic hand." He contended that the prerogatives and the duties of the people and of the Executive ought to be maintained within the limits of the

Constitution, and the man of law, by the mere fact of his studies, finds himself best placed to meet the necessities of this situation, provided that he acts within the Executive and invokes the rights of authority, and provided that his voice proceeds from the breast of the people, to maintain their prerogatives, or to moderate the encroachments of the powerful. In passing into the domain of politics, the man of law does not change his mission; there, still, he will have to render to each according to his works, and to cause justice to reign. He only widens the sphere of his activity. The tribunal to which he will address himself henceforth will be public opinion. The theme which he will develop will be the rights or the duties of a whole nation, and for audience he will have all the echoes of publicity.

This, as an eminent publicist had said, was an age in which each must bring his stone to the social edifice. Canada in the nineteenth century, when most societies were already old, could scarcely count a few centuries of existence. While in the old world only the reformer had an occupation, here all was new, and everything was still to build. We had the experience of the centuries to guide us. "The law is called upon to play another rôle in this country, an immense rôle, and one which belongs to it nowhere else. Two races share to-day the soil of Canada. I can say it here, for the time is no longer, the French and the English races have

not always been friends ; but I hasten to say it, and I say it to our glory, that race hatreds are finished on our Canadian soil. There is no longer any family here but the human family. It matters not the language the people speak, or the altars at which they kneel. We are coming every day upon happy results of this holy work, and at this celebration we have had still another proof of it. You have heard French and English names here, graven on the tables of honour. You have heard some address the word to you in English, and I who am now speaking, I am speaking to you in my mother tongue, I am speaking to you in French. There is in this fraternity a glory of which Canada cannot be proud enough, for many powerful nations might come here to seek a lesson in justice and humanity. To whom do we owe this happy state of affairs? There may be more than one cause for it, but the principal cause is the study of law. Two different systems of law rule this country: the French and the English. Each of these systems places under obligation not only the race to which it properly belongs, but each rules simultaneously the two races, and—a fact worth remarking—this introduction into the same country of two systems of legislation, entirely different, was carried out without violence, without usurpation, but solely as an effect of the laws of justice. It was natural that in passing under British domination the inhabitants of this country should continue to be ruled by their

ancient laws in all the ordinary transactions of life, but it was equally just that the new government should repress after its own laws offences against the public order." Mr. Laurier attributed to this mingling of legal systems the first great influence making for the reconciliation of the races. The work thus begun was continued by the same just provisions which allowed to each people the law that was suited to its traditions and ideas. It was noteworthy that the union of the races had not proceeded so far in any class of Canadian society as among the men of law. "The mission of the man of law in Canada," said Mr. Laurier, "embraces, in summing up, the following: justice, the most noble of all human perfections; patriotism, the noblest of all social virtues; the union between the peoples, the secret of the future. Now we see the end; upon ourselves depends what our efforts shall be in mounting to the height of it."

Among Mr. Laurier's contemporaries in the faculty of law at McGill were Mr. J. J. Curran, of the class of 1862, who became Solicitor-General in the Ministry of Sir John Thompson, and Sir Melbourne Tait, with whom Mr. Curran now sits on the Superior Court Bench of Quebec; the Hon. George W. Stephens, and Mr. Justice C. P. Davidson, of 1863; Mr. L. H. Davidson, K.C., of 1864; and Mr. Arthur Dansereau, of 1865, his fellow pupil at L'Assomption College, and the staunch

friend and ally of the brilliant Chapleau, in whom Mr. Laurier was to find the most formidable rival he has ever encountered in the French province.

Shortly after Mr. Laurier began the study of law at Montreal, he joined the *Institut Canadien*, and thereby struck his first blow for civil liberty, and registered his first protest against ecclesiastical domination in the realm of the intellect and in the field of public affairs. The *Institut Canadien* was a literary and scientific society, with a reading-room and library, and was founded in 1844 by a group of young, progressive, and independent thinkers, eager for personal distinction and ambitious to do useful and honourable work for the community. They adopted as their motto, "*altius tendimus*," and selected for their coat of arms the figure of a beehive with the words beneath, "*Travail et Concorde.*" Incorporation was obtained in 1852, and the act states that the object of the *Institut* is to extend and develop a taste for science, art, and literature. Among the incorporators were A. A. Dorion, Joseph Doutre, Rodolphe Laflamme, Eric Dorion, and other names of outstanding distinction in the annals of Quebec. The *Institut* became the literary and political workroom of many brilliant spirits, and the source of influences which penetrated deeply into the social and political life of the country. It is told that at a meeting of the *Institut* in 1854, addresses of congratulation were presented to fourteen of the members upon their election to seats in Parliament.

When the association was founded in 1844, there was no French reading-room or library in the whole Province of Quebec. But the organization of the *Institut* at Montreal furnished the nucleus of a popular and wide-spread movement, and ten years later there were more than one hundred such *Instituts* in the province, and of these, sixty-two were incorporated. They received a small annual grant from Parliament, and were held in great favour by the masses of the people. By the clergy, however, they were regarded with grave and increasing distrust, and soon indirect measures were taken to accomplish their destruction, or at least to alter their character and limit their activities.

It was first sought to secure the adoption of a rule by the St. Jean Baptiste Society, under whose auspices many of the *Instituts* were conducted, that only French-Canadians, or those married to French-Canadian women, could become members. Mr. Francis Cassidy, although of Irish birth, belonged both to the St. Jean Baptiste Society, and to the Montreal *Institut*, and when it was desired to make him President of the *Institut*, the constitution was amended so as to open the doors to all nationalities. This angered the clergy, and they organized a general attack upon the *Instituts* throughout the province. They opened many rival institutions under clerical control, which they named *Instituts Nationaux*. Hostile witnesses declare that some of these societies existed only on paper,

but that they succeeded, nevertheless, in obtaining grants from Parliament. Spiritual terrors were also employed, the character of the libraries attacked, and loyalty to the *Instituts* became hardly distinguishable from denial of the Catholic faith, and open contempt for the religious authorities. This was an intolerable situation for many Catholics who had sought in the *Instituts* only congenial companionship, access to good reading, and intellectual culture, and they yielded dutiful obedience to the clerical demand. By 1858 all the original *Instituts* outside of Montreal had closed their doors, or had passed under clerical control.

The Montreal *Institut*, however, offered a prudent but determined resistance to the ecclesiastical authorities. Its members were reluctant to make the quarrel, and equally reluctant to surrender their right of private judgment and abandon the institution which they had reared with such high purpose and such genuine enthusiasm. In 1857 the society had seven hundred members, and had secured commodious premises for its meetings and library. The clergy proceeded to establish rival institutions, and opened the *Cabinet de Lecture* and *Cercle Littéraire* under the auspices of the Sulpicians, and the *Union Catholique* under the auspices of the Jesuits. Each of these societies had libraries and reading rooms, and was maintained at very small cost to the members. It was next attempted to persuade the *Institut* to exclude from membership all who did

not profess the Catholic religion, and also to shut out of the reading room the Montreal *Witness* and *Semeur Canadien*, two Protestant papers that were uniformly unfriendly to the extremer pretensions of the Catholic clergy. These two propositions were the subject of heated and protracted debate, but both were rejected as inconsistent with the spirit of the *Institut*, and wholly foreign to the aims and purposes of its founders. It was then represented that the library contained books of an immoral character, and a petition was circulated declaratory of the truth of this statement, and pledging the signers to withdraw from membership. As a result of this movement one hundred and fifty members withdrew in a body and organized the *Institut Canadien Français*. The new society was countenanced by the clergy and aided by clerical subsidies, but it was established by laymen and was not under direct clerical control. Its main purpose was to receive all such members of the *Institut Canadien* as could be induced to follow the example of the one hundred and fifty who withdrew in consequence of the clerical condemnation of some of its books and periodicals.

The long, resolute, and inflexible attack upon the *Institut* was led by Bishop Bourget. This resourceful and aggressive ecclesiastic, whom we shall meet again in these pages, was born in 1799, and was a native of the parish of Pointe Levis. In 1821 he went to Montreal as secretary to Bishop

Lartigue. In 1837 he was made Bishop of Telmesse, and coadjutor of Bishop Lartigue, and on the death of this Bishop in 1840, he became his successor in the episcopal see of Montreal. He was distinguished for piety, for courage, for inflexibility of purpose, for zealous exaltation of the ecclesiastical order, for bold assertion of the extreme pretensions of the Church to supremacy in civil affairs. He established the order of the Jesuits at Montreal, he founded a score of other religious communities and many charitable and educational institutions, and attempted to establish a Jesuit university at Montreal as a rival to Laval at Quebec. He was intolerant of free speech and free action in public affairs, and was one of the chief authors of the *Programme Catholique*, which required all Parliamentary candidates in Quebec constituencies to conform to the teachings of the Church, and to give full and entire adhesion to Roman Catholic doctrines in religion, in politics, and in social economy.

The quarrel between the Bishop and the *Institut* arose over the contention that the library contained immoral books. This, at least was the point selected for attack, but that the sources of the quarrel lay deeper, can hardly be doubted. The Bishop was irreconcilably opposed to free speech and free inquiry in the domain of politics, science, and religion, intolerant of the growth of all influences, and hostile to the existence of all moral or intel-

lectual agencies that were not directly created and controlled by the ecclesiastics. Hence, if fault could not have been found with the books of the *Institut*, some other plan for its destruction would have been elaborated. In 1858, some members of the society, acting by inspiration of the clergy, asked for the appointment of a committee to make a list of such books as should be excluded from the library. The majority of the members, however, refused to sanction the proposition, and held that the *Institut* contained no improper books, and that it was the sole judge of the morality of such works as the library contained. "The *Institut*," they said, "has always been, and is alone competent to judge of the morality of its library, the administration of which it is capable of conducting without the intervention of foreign influences." This defiant action was greatly resented by the Bishop, and shortly afterwards he issued a pastoral letter in which the course of the *Institut* was considered and condemned. He pointed out that its members had fallen into two great errors, first in holding that they were the proper judges of the morality of their books, as that office belonged only to the Bishop, and secondly in declaring that the library contained no immoral books, although some of the works upon its shelves were in the Index at Rome. He cited a decision of the Council of Trent that any one who read or kept heretical books became subject to excommunication, and that any one who

read or kept books forbidden upon other grounds was open to censure and punishment. He appealed to the *Institut* to recognize the authority of the Church, and to expunge the resolution declaring its competency to pass upon the character of the books supplied to its patrons. Otherwise no Catholic could be permitted to continue in membership.

Thus the quarrel grew, and it broadened and deepened for years to the ever increasing injury of the *Institut*, and to the grave loss and embarrassment of many of its most influential supporters. Such were the relations between the Bishop and the society when Mr. Laurier, a young Catholic student, on the threshold of his career, came to Montreal, and cast in his lot with the resolute few who were determined to adhere to its fortunes and maintain the right of independent thinking and the prerogatives of intellectual freedom in the face of clerical displeasure.

Mr. Laurier had also an active connection with an association of law students called the *Institut des Lois. Le Pays*, then the organ of Quebec Radicalism, in its issue of October 27th, 1863, announces a meeting at which Gonzalve Doutre would deliver an address on the subject, "Does religious profession in Canada entail civil death?" The notice is signed "W. Laurier, President."[1] Mr. Laurier him-

[1] *Le Pays* was twice condemned by Bishop Bourget, and finally destroyed.

self, during this year, delivered an address before the *Institut des Lois* on an equally delicate and disturbing question: "Does the farmer or the proprietor pay the tithe?" Many of the papers read before the association were, of course, on general legal, literary, and political topics, and there seems to have been no deliberate purpose to raise issues that were distasteful to the religious authorities.

On December 3rd, 1863, Gonzalve Doutre delivered a lecture before the *Institut Canadien* on the subject, "Is the present system of education defective?" Mr. Laurier took part in the discussion. *Le Pays* says that all who participated in the debate spoke in moderation, and that while they attacked the educational system which then prevailed, they were careful to say nothing that would give offence, or was calculated to antagonize the most sensitive and scrupulous among the champions of established educational methods. It must be remembered, however, that the system attacked was under strict clerical control, and all such discussion must have been distinctly unwelcome to the ecclesiastics. The meeting unanimously resolved that the system was defective and unsatisfactory. Mr. Laurier's name appears among the Vice-Presidents of the *Institut Canadien* for 1865 and 1866, and as he left Montreal in December, 1866, he doubtless held this office at the time of his removal to Arthabaskaville.

Mr. Laurier was one of the Committee of the

Institut appointed in 1863 to interview Bishop Bourget, in the endeavour to reconcile the quarrel and overcome his interdiction. His associates on the Committee were the Hon. L. A. Dessaulles, then President of the *Institut*, Dr. J. E. Coderre, and the famous Joseph Doutre. They were politely received, but quite failed to elicit any definite statement from the unyielding Bishop. They submitted the library catalogue, and urged the Bishop to specify such books as were objectionable to the religious authorities. They undertook to put such books under lock and key, and to guarantee that they would not be read by anyone without his express permission. In February, 1864, the *Institut* stopped a lecture which was advertised to be delivered on "Reason and Faith," and in March it was formally resolved to have no discussions in the *Institut* that might touch religious susceptibilities. But Bishop Bourget could not be conciliated. He retained the library catalogue for six months, but kept a stern silence upon the points on which the Committee had sought instruction and enlightenment. Early in 1864 the Bishop issued a pastoral letter in condemnation of a lecture delivered before the *Institut* by Mr. Dessaulles, in which he said: "We will then pray that no evil may result to anyone from that dreadful monster Rationalism, which has anew lifted up its hideous head in the *Institut*, and which seeks to spread the infectious poison in a pamphlet, repeating the blasphemies

uttered from that seat of pestilence." The truth is, that the Bishop was resolved to force the *Institut* into an absolute surrender, while upon the other hand the leaders of the *Institut* were just as determined to maintain the association and assert their indubitable right to freedom of opinion and freedom of discussion.

In 1866 Mr. Laurier's active connection with the *Institut* ceased in consequence of his removal from Montreal. But he was still to bear the consequences of his identification with the society, and it therefore becomes necessary to follow its fortunes further, and to see the end of the conflict which this resolute group of French Liberals waged for many long years against the ecclesiastical authorities.

When the *Institut* became finally convinced that relief from the clerical interdiction could not be obtained by direct appeal to Bishop Bourget, it was decided to make representations to the Head of the Church. Before making the appeal to Rome, a committee again visited the Bishop, and asked to have the objectionable books specified. The Bishop, however, replied that while there were such books in the library it was not his duty to indicate them, as it could lead to no practical result. The appeal was taken by seventeen Catholic members, and was a private proceeding, in which neither the Protestant members nor the *Institut* as a body were concerned. The *Institut* waited for four years,

but Rome returned no answer, and in the meantime a new phase of the quarrel at home had developed.

At the celebration of the twenty-fourth anniversary of the *Institut* in 1868, Mr. Dessaulles delivered an address on tolerance, eloquent in composition, noble in teaching, and catholic in spirit. He said: "We form a society of students, and this society is purely laical. Is an association of laymen, not under direct religious control, permissible, speaking from a Catholic point of view? Is an association of laymen belonging to various religious denominations permissible from a Catholic point of view? What evil is there, in a country of mixed religious opinions, in men of mature mind belonging to different Christian sects, giving one another the kiss of peace on the field of science? What! Is it not permissible, when Protestants and Catholics are placed side by side in a country, in a city, for them to pursue together their career of intellectual progress? There are certain men who are never quiet except when they have made enemies both in the domain of conscience and of intelligence. Where do these men get their evangelical notions? Where then are prudence and simple good sense? There are those who, themselves a minority in the State, cannot endure persons of opposite opinions, and in whose mouth the word ostracism is always to be found. But we have no difficulty in enduring you with all your perversity of mind and of heart.

Imitate, therefore, a good example, instead of setting a bad one. We therefore form a literary society of laymen. Our object is progress, work our means, tolerance our connecting tie. We have for all the respect which men of sincerity never withhold. There are hypocrites who see evil everywhere, and who fear it because they are acquainted with it."

Mr. Horace Greeley, of the New York *Tribune*, a great soldier of freedom, also spoke at the meeting, and in the course of his address pronounced this royal creed: "For the true Liberal, in the century in which we live, there is but one country, the World; but one religion, love to God and man; and one patriotism, to benefit and elevate the human family. We have for adversaries, tyranny, ignorance, superstition, and everything which oppresses or degrades." These and like utterances of noble and strenuous import appeared in the *Annuaire*, the annual report of the society for 1868, and greatly aggravated the quarrel between the clergy and the *Institut*.

In 1869 Gonzalve Doutre was sent to Rome to press the appeal against Bishop Bourget's interdiction, and the Bishop also visited Rome during the same year to attend the Vatican Council. Mr. Doutre was soon convinced that his protest would be ineffectual, and while he was still prosecuting his business, the Bishop sent out a pastoral letter to Canada announcing that the Pope had rejected the appeal and condemned the *Institut*. The people

were forbidden to belong to the *Institut* while it taught pernicious doctrines, or to publish, retain, keep, or read the *Annuaire* of 1868; and it was further declared that all persons who persisted in remaining members of the *Institut*, or in reading the *Annuaire*, would be deprived of the sacraments.

When this pastoral reached Montreal the members of the *Institut* held a meeting and resolved, "(1) that the *Institut Canadien*, the object of whose foundation is purely literary and scientific, teaches no doctrine of any kind, and carefully excludes all teaching of pernicious doctrine; (2) that the Catholic members of the *Institut Canadien*, having learned of the condemnation of the *Annuaire* of 1868 of the *Institut Canadien* declare that they submit purely and simply to this decree." But this submission did not abate the attack nor remove the condemnation. Bishop Bourget wrote from Rome that these concessions were hypocritical and inadequate, and mainly, "because this act of submission forms part of a report unanimously approved by the *Institut*, in which a resolution is proclaimed, until then kept secret, which establishes the principle of religious toleration, which has been the principal ground of the condemnation of the *Institut*." There was, in fact, no refuge for the Catholic members of the *Institut*, except in absolute submission and dissolution of the society.

CHAPTER III

THE CHURCH AND THE PRINTER

ONE of the charges made against Mr. Laurier in the political campaigns of later years was that he was the companion of "apostates of the Chiniquy breed," of "excommunicated persons," and of "friends of Guibord." The story of Joseph Guibord reads like a tale set far back in the despotic ages.

This man Guibord was a printer, a French-Canadian Roman Catholic, of good character, and earnest religious spirit. It is said that for twenty years he personally superintended the composition and printing of Bishop Bourget's pastoral letters, and other work connected with the foreign missions of the Church. For ten years he put into type in the Indian language the catechism and hymns for the Roman Catholic missions in the North-West. The first book stereotyped in Canada was done under his supervision. He was, in fact, a scientific craftsman, greatly esteemed by his co-workers, and well considered by many of the Catholic ecclesiastics. He had, however, that vigour of mind and independence of spirit which seem to be born of the handling of types; and when the Church which he loved sought to control his judgment and crush out his individuality, he settled down to immovable

resistance, and shamed many men who walked in higher ways by his quiet courage and fine assertion of the essential principles of human freedom. He became a member of the *Institut* two or three years after it was organized, was one of the two hundred members who refused to withdraw when the society was condemned on account of its possession of books that were covered by the Index at Rome, and also one of those who appealed to Rome against the attitude of the Bishop. He died suddenly on November 18th, 1869. A few weeks before his death he sent for a priest, who came and heard his confession. But, acting under the direct instructions of the Bishop, the priest refused to administer extreme unction unless Guibord would withdraw from the *Institut*. This he declined to do, and the last rites were not administered. He grew better and for some weeks seemed likely to recover, but death came at last so suddenly that it was impossible to get a priest to his bedside. Application was made for permission to bury the remains in the cemetery of Côte des Neiges, and was refused on the ground that as a member of the *Institut* he could not receive absolution, and therefore could not have ecclesiastical burial. M. Roussellot, the curé of Notre Dame, offered, however, to inter Guibord in that unconsecrated portion of the cemetery allotted to persons who are buried without religious rites. The widow was willing to accept burial in the cemetery proper without

religious rites, but this also was refused. The remains were therefore temporarily deposited in a vault at the adjoining Protestant cemetery, and proceedings were immediately begun to cause the Church authorities to bury Guibord in the consecrated portion of Côte des Neiges.

Mr. Joseph Doutre and Mr. Laflamme, with whom Mr. Laurier had studied, appeared as counsel for the petitioners. Doutre was an heroic figure throughout the long and strenuous controversy in Quebec for the establishment of the principles of civil and religious liberty. His active participation in public affairs dated back to 1844, and as a young man he had penned an attack upon George E. Cartier which led to a meeting with pistols on the Chambly road, and bred between the two an incurable personal and political quarrel. He was a profound constitutional authority, an influential contributor to many of the public journals, and one of the most able and skilful advocates whom Quebec has produced. He was one of the leaders in the struggle for the abolition of the feudal tenure, and was conspicuous in the agitation to destroy the system of Crown nominations to the Legislative Council, and to establish an elective body. He was twice a candidate for election to the Parliament of united Canada, and twice defeated. His last political contest was fought in 1861, and thereafter he gave himself wholly to his profession. He was one of the Canadian counsel before the Halifax Fishery

Commission appointed to determine the amount of compensation due to Canada under the terms of the Washington treaty; and he had a knowledge of the old French law such as few, if any, of his contemporaries possessed. He was the very soul of the great contest before the courts and before the people to force the Catholic ecclesiastics to bury Guibord in consecrated ground, and to establish the civil rights of the members of the *Institut Canadien*. We have outgrown many of his opinions. Some of these he outgrew as well. It is not the spirit of Joseph Doutre, in his hot and eager youth, which informs many of our social and political fashions and many of our most cherished institutions; but his superb courage and steadfast assertion of elementary human rights shine out with enduring lustre on the pages of Canadian history.

The application for a writ of mandamus to compel the burial of Guibord in consecrated ground was heard before Mr. Justice Mondelet. Seventeen days were spent in the arguments. It was contended in behalf of the ecclesiastical authorities that by the terms of the cession of Canada to Great Britain the Roman Catholic religion was to be free of all interference from the civil authorities, while counsel for Madame Guibord held that the right to an ecclesiastical burial was a civil right which the Church could not deny. Judge Mondelet, although a French-Canadian Roman Catholic, sustained the application and ordered a peremptory writ of man-

damus to issue requiring the curé and fabrique of Notre Dame to bury the deceased within six days. The Church authorities appealed to the Court of Review, and there the decision of Mr. Justice Mondelet was reversed. It was maintained that action should have been taken against the curé personally, and that the writ was informal. Next came an appeal by counsel for the widow to the Court of Queen's Bench, consisting of one Protestant and four Roman Catholic judges. Mr. Doutre challenged the fitness of the Court to determine the issue on the ground that the Catholic judges, if faithful adherents of the Church, could not do justice in any cause which involved a conflict between civil and ecclesiastical laws. This seems to have been a harsh and ungracious proceeding, and one which finds small justification in the conduct of many of the Catholic judges of Lower Canada in great instances of conflict between the civil and ecclesiastical authorities. The Court rejected Mr. Doutre's petition, and held that his contention was equivalent to an accusation of treason and perjury against the Catholic judges. Doutre then moved for an appeal to the Privy Council of England, and the money necessary to prosecute the appeal before the court of last resort was provided by the *Institut Canadien* and Catholic and Protestant citizens of Montreal.

While these proceedings were in progress, Madame Guibord died. By her will she gave her

property to the *Institut Canadien*, and also appointed that body her universal legatee. Leave was granted by the Privy Council to the *Institut* to continue the appeal in her behalf, and on June 17th, 1874, the case came formally before the Judicial Committee. Mr. Doutre appeared for the *Institut*, while the chief Canadian counsel for the Church was Mr. L. A. Jetté, of Montreal, who once defeated Sir George Cartier in Montreal East, and is now Lieutenant-Governor of Quebec.

The Privy Council in rendering judgment went into an exhaustive consideration of many of the issues involved, and particularly of the status of the Roman Catholic Church in Lower Canada, and the contention that under the terms of the cession of the country to Great Britain, the Church was independent of the civil authority. The Court held that there were no regular ecclesiastical courts in Lower Canada, such as existed and were recognized by the State when the Province formed part of the dominions of France. But it was pointed out that a bishop is always a *judex ordinarius*, according to the Canon Law, and may hold a court and deliver judgment. Unless such sentences were recognized there would exist no means of determining amongst the Roman Catholics of Canada the many questions touching faith and discipline, which, upon the admitted canons of their church, may arise. There was, however, no proof that any sentence of excommunication was ever passed

against Guibord by the Bishop or any other ecclesiastical authority, and, therefore, the Court was relieved from the necessity of considering how far such a sentence, if passed, might have been examinable by the temporal court, when a question touching its legal effect and validity required to be determined. It was shown that Guibord had not wilfully abstained from receiving the sacraments of the Church, but that he was refused the sacraments when he desired to receive them, because he continued to be a member of the *Institut Canadien*. It was pointed out that the *et cætera* in the Quebec Ritual might be, according to the supposed exigency of the particular case, expanded so as to include within its ban any person being in habits of intimacy or conversing with a member of a literary society possessing a prohibited book; any person visiting a friend who possessed such a book; any person sending his son to a school in the library of which there was such a book, or going to a shop where such books were sold. Moreover, the Index which already forbade Grotius, Pascal, Pothier, Thaunus, and Sismondi, might be made to include all the writings of jurists, and all legal reports of judgments supposed to be hostile to the Church of Rome, so that the Roman Catholic lawyer might find it difficult to pursue the studies of his profession. Their Lordships declared that they were satisfied that such a discretionary enlargement of the categories in the Ritual would not have been deemed

to be within the authority of the law of the Gallican Church as it existed in Canada before the cession; and in their opinion it was not established that there had been such an alteration in the status or law of that Church founded on the consent of its members as would warrant such an interpretation of the Ritual, and that the true and just conclusion of law on the point was that the fact of being a member of the *Institut* did not bring a man within the category of a public sinner to whom Christian burial could be legally refused.

It was further said that according to the ecclesiastical law of France, a personal sentence was in most cases required in order to constitute a man a public sinner, and that no evidence had been produced to establish the very grave proposition that Her Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects in Lower Canada had consented since the cession to be bound by a rule which involved the recognition of the authority of the Inquisition, an authority never admitted but always repudiated by the old law of France. Their Lordships, therefore, decided that Guibord at the time of his death was not under any such valid ecclesiastical sentence or censure as would, according to the Quebec Ritual, or any law bearing upon Roman Catholics in Canada, justify the denial of ecclesiastical sepulture to his remains. They accordingly ordered the curé and fabrique of Notre Dame to permit the burial of Guibord in that part of the cemetery in which the remains of

Roman Catholics who receive ecclesiastical burial were usually interred, and required the defendants to pay to the *Institut Canadien* all the costs of the widow in the Lower Courts and the cost of the appeal to the Judicial Committee, and said in closing: "Their Lordships cannot conclude without expressing their regret that any conflict should have arisen between the ecclesiastical members of the Roman Catholic Church in Montreal and the lay members belonging to the Canadian Institute. It has been their Lordships' duty to determine the questions submitted to them in accordance with what has appeared to them to be the law of the Roman Catholic Church in Lower Canada. If, as was suggested, difficulties should arise by reason of an interment without religious ceremonies in that part of the ground to which the mandamus applies, it will be in the power of the ecclesiastical authorities to obviate them by permitting the performance of such ceremonies as are sufficient for that purpose; and their Lordships hope that the question of burial with such ceremonies will be reconsidered by them, and further litigation avoided."

Guibord's first funeral took place on Sunday, November 21st, 1869. Two hundred and fifty friends and sympathizers accompanied the body to the Catholic cemetery. The hearse was one used by Protestants, and at the gate the coffin was taken out and carried on a sleigh to the chapel. Burial was refused except in the strangers' lot,

unconsecrated ground, where the bodies of suicides, and criminals dying without confession were interred. Protest and persuasion were alike futile to alter this decision, and the body was therefore returned to the hearse and conveyed to a vault in the Protestant cemetery. Here the remains lay until September 2nd, 1875, when, in pursuance of the judgment of the Privy Council, they were once more carried through the streets of Montreal, to be deposited in consecrated ground in the Catholic cemetery. The hearse was surmounted by a cross, and the British flag was thrown over the coffin. But when the procession reached the cemetery, the gates were found to be closed and barred, and a hostile mob of three or four hundred persons was gathered in the neighbourhood. The cortége was received with jeers and yells, the crowd rapidly increased, the driver of the hearse was forced to whip up his horses, and a shower of stones followed his retreat. The friends of the *Institut*, under the prudent and responsible leadership of Mr. Doutre, behaved with excellent judgment, and avoided a riot which might have had very serious consequences. Once more the body of Guibord was returned to the vault in the Protestant cemetery. During the afternoon the grave dug for its reception was filled up by a few of the rioters. It is not necessary, nor is it clear that it would be just, to hold the ecclesiastical authorities responsible for this outbreak of mob violence, and the tumult and

excitement which the event caused throughout Montreal. The stubborn contest of the *Institut* with the Church had excited intense feeling in the breasts of many Roman Catholics, the tone of the clerical press was violent and inflammatory, the *Institut* itself had vehement and reckless defenders, sectarian animosities were thoroughly aroused, and the fact that the leaders of the *Institut* were Liberals, imported a savage partisan spirit into the controversy. On every hand fuel for a dangerous conflagration was provided, and it is only surprising that no graver consequences resulted.

The *Nouveau Monde* warned Mr. Doutre that to desire actually to force the gates of the cemetery and show his *mort* to the public was simply to drive the people to revolt. *La Minerve* suggested that the funeral had been postponed in order to await the arrival of "a troop of Orangemen and fanatical Grits from Upper Canada, who will be organized to strengthen the hands of our *Rouges*." These "wretched *Rouges* and apostates," the *Minerve* said, "without heart or patriotism, do not fear to excite Protestant and English fanaticism against their compatriots, and to ally themselves even with the sects of Upper Canada to shed the blood of their brethren." The *Rouge* party and the *Institut*, the paper declared, had dug their own grave in digging that of Guibord. The *Bien Public*, a French Liberal paper, maintained that the case was one which should never have come before the courts,

but that to oppose by force the execution of the judgment of the Privy Council, was an act of unpardonable folly. Indictments were laid against fifteen of the rioters, but no bill was returned by the Grand Jury, and an attempt to maintain a suit for damages against the fabrique proved equally abortive. A guard was placed at the Protestant cemetery in consequence of rumours that the body of Guibord would be forcibly removed from the vault wherein it was deposited, but nothing occurred to show that this precaution was necessary. Guibord again reposed quietly in his temporary resting place until the final burial at Côte des Neiges, on November 16th, 1875.

On the Sunday before the third and successful attempt to bury Guibord, the Catholic priests in the city and district commanded their people not to go near the funeral, and to refrain from all disturbance. The Rev. V. Rousselot, curé of Notre Dame however, refused to perform the ecclesiastical rites over the remains, but attended the burial as a civil officer. He declared that he could not grant ecclesiastical sepulture, and the friends of Guibord could not effect or order his civil interment in the part of the cemetery consecrated by the prayers of the Church. "If" he added, "despite all this, you persist in your deplorable design, I am obliged to protest resolutely against the violation of the cemetery, of the laws of the Church, and of the liberties of Catholics in Lower Canada." An enormous crowd

thronged the streets of Montreal, through which the procession passed, from the Protestant cemetery to Côte des Neiges, but everywhere quiet and decorum prevailed, and the presence of troops, called out for the occasion, was wholly unnecessary. The admonitions of the clergy were effectual, and in that very fact was striking evidence of the authority of the Church with the masses of its people. The gates of the cemetery opened to the body, which once again sought its bed in consecrated ground; the grave beside that of his wife lay open, the body was lowered, cement mixed with sheets of tin and scrap iron was filled in over the coffin, the top dressing of earth was added, and Guibord was at rest, and safe against the unsympathetic hand that would disturb his repose.

A few days after the attempted burial on September 2nd, Bishop Bourget issued a pastoral letter to the clergy, to the religious communities, and to all the faithful of his diocese. He said it was a necessity as well as a duty to endeavour to appease a certain agitation which had taken hold of minds, and which, fermenting from day to day, might lead to some fatal catastrophe. "That which has roused you up in such large numbers," he said, "is the fear that your cemetery, which you justly venerate as a holy place, might be profaned by the burial of a man dead in the disgrace and under the anathema of the Church." He commended the calm and moderate conduct of his people, and pointed

out that effusion of blood would be a fresh profanation of the cemetery. He said, "If, on the one hand, we have managed all things so that the public peace was not troubled, we were, on the other, occupied with means to be taken so that the honour of the holy Church might be respected, and that the holy place should not be profaned. This was to declare, in virtue of the divine power which we exercise in the name of the Pastor of pastors, that the place where the body of this rebellious child of the Church would be deposited should be made separate from the rest of the consecrated cemetery, so that it would only be a profane place. For we do not have need to prove to you that in the solemn act of our consecration to God, full power was given us to bind and to loose, to bless and to curse, to consecrate persons, places and temples, and to interdict them, to separate from the body of the Church the members who dishonour and outrage her, to hand over to Satan those who hear not the Church, in order that they may henceforth be considered as pagans and publicans, so long as they return not to God by sincere penitence. It is upon these incontestable and uncontested principles of this divine authority that, desiring to maintain in all its integrity the discipline of the Church concerning the burial of its children, and to prevent, at the same time, all disorder for the future, we declare by these presents, in order that no one may be able to plead ignorance, that the

part of the cemetery where the body of the late Joseph Guibord should be interred, if ever after this it is buried there, in any manner whatever, will be undone, and will, *ipso facto*, remain interdicted and separated from the rest of the cemetery." He pointed out that under these circumstances there was no pretext for violent opposition to the burial of Guibord in any part of the cemetery, since that part would become interdict and separated from the holy place.

At a meeting of the bishops held at Quebec in October, the conduct of the *Institut* and the judgment of the Privy Council were considered. The bishops declared that the Catholic Church in Canada was threatened in her liberty and in her most sacred rites, and that the first authors of the outrage had been brought up on the knees of a Catholic mother. "To palliate this criminal usurpation they have invoked the pretended Gallican Liberties, as if Catholic unity, founded by Jesus Christ with the supreme authority of Peter and his successors, were but an empty name. What authority is that which by invoking his liberties the subject can escape? What prince, what republic, would acknowledge such a principle if appealed to by a province, notwithstanding the oft-repeated declarations of the Constitution and the supreme tribunals of the State?" In a later pastoral from Bishop Bourget, issued before the final burial of Guibord and read in the Catholic churches, he reviewed in

detail many of the facts and incidents of the long and painful controversy, and touched upon the judgment of the Privy Council. He admitted that Guibord was not warned and denounced by name, but insisted that he was under the sentence of excommunication pronounced against all who belonged to the *Institut Canadien*. He pointed out that by withdrawing the grave from consecrated ground he had safeguarded the liberty of the Church without entering into conflict with authority. He said that the Gallican Liberties, to which appeal was made in behalf of Guibord, were not recognized even in France, and could not be set up to authorize encroachments on the Church in Canada. He continued: "This decision might not have been given if the noble lords who compose the Privy Council and who advised Her Majesty could have been able to assure themselves that it would have tended to strangely grieve the bishops of this country, whose loyalty has never been denied; to wound the religious feelings of a devoted people, who have on all occasions joined fidelity to their Sovereign with attachment to their religion; to cause Catholics in this country to fear that it is wished to deprive them of their religious liberty; to cast into this province a brand of discord which it might be very difficult to extinguish; and to excite between citizens of different races and religions antipathies and hatreds that might have very serious results."

On the Sunday succeeding the funeral, still another pastoral letter from Bishop Bourget was read in the Catholic churches of his diocese. In this he rejoiced in the docility of the people to the voice of their pastors, and expressed his satisfaction that the unhappy affair had terminated without bloodshed. He declared that it was respect for the cemetery and the fear lest it were profaned by the burial of a man dead in the disgrace of the Church, which revolted many Catholics and led them to oppose the entrance of his body into Côte des Neiges. He reminded the people that the threat which was made had been accomplished, and that the place where the rebellious child of the Church had been laid was now separated from the rest of the consecrated cemetery and could be no more anything but a profane place. He proceeded: "This is a fact accomplished with so much solemnity, and amid circumstances so deplorable, that it will remain deeply graven in the memory of the numerous strangers who shall visit the cemetery, as well as in that of citizens who shall daily go thither to pour forth their prayers. Each in casting sadly his regards on that tomb which is not covered with the blessings of heaven because it is separated from the holy ground that the Church has blessed, will give way to emotions more or less painful. 'Here lies,' he will exclaim in the recesses of his soul, 'the body of the too famous Joseph Guibord, who died in rebellion against the common Father of the

Church, under the anathema of the Church; who could not pass the gates of this sacred place save escorted by armed men, as if for battle against the enemies of the country; who, but for the good disposition of his fellow-citizens, would have caused blood to flow; who was conducted to this sepulchre, not under the protection of the Cross, but under that of the bayonets of the military; who has been laid in this grave in two feet of earth, not to the impressive chant of the prayers which the Church is accustomed to make for her children, but amid the curses contained in the breasts of the attendants; for whom the priest obliged to be present could perform no religious ceremony; could utter no prayer for the repose of his soul; could not say a single *requiescat in pace*; could not, in short, sprinkle a single drop of holy water, whose virtue it is to moderate and quench the flames of the terrible fire that purifies souls in the other world.'"

Two letters from Archbishop Lynch, of Toronto, which appeared in *The Globe* during September, 1875, form an interesting chapter in the strange and stormy history of the *Institut Canadien*. He asked if the Fenian organization were established in Canada and put under the ban of the Church like the *Institut*, and if one of the members at his last moments refused to renounce the society and accepted in preference to die without the sacraments of the Church, would the Privy Council of the

Queen absolve the memory of the man and force the Church to give him ecclesiastical burial? He could not think so. Nor, he argued, would the Protestants, and especially the Orangemen, willingly acquiesce in what they would consider an unjust decree of a Catholic Sovereign, in a like case where they would be the aggrieved. He went on to say that the French Canadian in coming under British rule had gained one immense advantage in that he was cut off from revolutionary France when infidelity commenced to permeate and ruin all classes, especially the lower, of French society. Hence, the descendants of the French immigrants grew up a religious and loyal people. But in the course of time, well-to-do Canadians revisited France and brought back the seeds of irreligion and too much independence. To foster and perpetuate these evil plants they formed the *Institut Canadien*, and filled their library with books fetid with the most rampant infidelity, such as was destroying the faith and morality of France. The Bishop of Montreal desired to have these books removed, and required that a priest of his appointment should watch over the morality of the library and the members of the *Institut*. This, he contended, was not beyond the faculties of a bishop of the Catholic Church in his treatment of those who professed to owe him obedience, and who wished to receive from him the sacraments.

But the *Institut*, wrote the Archbishop, retained

its library and continued its opposition, and was consequently proscribed. The evil ceased to become greater because good Catholics no longer joined the society. He believed that Protestants of the various religious communities would likewise refuse communion to the man who would disobey the formal injunction of their synod or conference. He argued that it would be an outrage for the State to force any religious community to bury with religious ceremonies the body of one of their members, who, whilst he was alive, was excommunicated. The lot in the cemetery of the Côte des Neiges was sold with the condition, expressed or understood, that it was sold for the burial of those only who died in communion with the Church. When that condition was wanting the lot was forfeited. The Catholic Church, however, provided for the burial of those who died out of her fold, and in every cemetery a place was set apart for the burial of such persons. The State, in the case of Guibord, was interfering in matters not of its competency, but the interference must be tolerated in order to avoid a greater evil. He declared that if the case happened in Toronto he would hold himself neutral. The State could use the power of force and bury the body in the consecrated cemetery, but he would give no active assistance. He would then order the grave to be fenced in, and would proceed to consecrate the rest of the cemetery. He did not think the ashes of a notorious sinner who died unrepent-

ant would injure the souls or bodies of those whose bones lay in the cemetery. Nor would the bones of mad dogs or other unclean animals cause contamination. He was not surprised that the Catholics of Montreal were outraged over the desecration of their cemetery, but they should not expose their lives in resisting the State. If they were commanded to renounce their faith, then they should suffer martyrdom rather than obey imperial mandates, as the early Christians did.[1]

Mr. Joseph Doutre, in a letter to *The Globe* of September 15th, dealt at length with the statements of the Archbishop. He argued that until recent changes in the constitution of the Catholic Church the old ecclesiastical law of France was still the ecclesiastical law of Lower Canada. From time immemorial, Catholic France, both at home and in the colonies, had maintained that the sepulture of the dead, even in the time when ecclesiastical courts were in full operation, was exclusively cognizable by civil court. The law never allowed excommunication unless it were publicly denounced and personal, after admonitions. The French ecclesiastical and public law, as left to Lower Canada at the time of the treaty of cession, also gave to the civil courts the right to examine whether excommunication, when pronounced, was conformable in its causes with the canons or not. The members of the *Institut Canadien* were never excommunicated,

[1] Toronto *Globe*, September 10th and 11th, 1875.

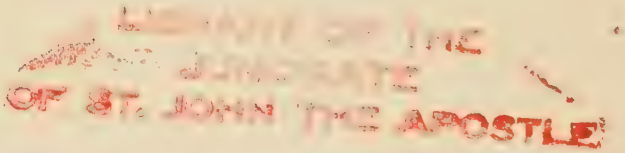
even collectively, and Guibord was never excommunicated, either collectively with others, or personally. He denied that the library was filled with infidel books, pointed out that no such sweeping charge had ever been made by Bishop Bourget, and mentioned that when a similar charge was made by the *Nouveau Monde*, an action for libel taken by the *Institut* was maintained. He said that members of the *Institut* had not claimed the right to read a disapproved book, but had held and asserted the right to be members of a literary society which might have condemned books in its library. If they were wrong, no Catholic could be a member of Parliament, inasmuch as the library of Parliament contained books condemned at Rome. He met other points raised by the Archbishop, and which have been covered in the course of this record, and concluded, "The Guibord case will have this beneficial influence on the future of this country; it will teach those who invoke treaties and law that these facts act both ways; that rights have their correlative duties; that no one has the privilege of using rights and repudiating duties; that there is only one Sovereign over these lands, the civil and political government; that any attempt to defy that authority may have the support of a few, but will be frowned down by all men of any worth or standing, without distinction of creed or nationality."

The credit and fortunes of the *Institut* were greatly shaken by these destructive and tumultuous

proceedings. A stern and gallant band heroically withstood the assaults of the clergy, but few new members were added, and Catholics naturally shrank from identification with the society. By 1875 the membership had been reduced to 150, and half of these were English. Thereafter the support which the *Institut* received from the Catholic people steadily declined, and the necessity for Protestant support was less apparent. Finally the books and papers were handed over to the Fraser Institute, a free Public Library, founded by the bequest of Hugh Fraser, a Scottish Protestant citizen of Montreal, and the active work of the *Institut Canadien* terminated. The Fraser Institute has about 41,000 books, and of these the *Institut Canadien* contributed 8,000. The chief librarian is French, and the assistants speak French. There is no other free library in Montreal except that in the basement of the Jesuit Church, and that in the *Cercle Ville Marie*, controlled by the Sulpicians. These libraries are rather for theological students than serious attempts to supply literary and scientific works. The result is that one-half of the patrons of the Fraser Institute are French Canadians, who read not only science and literature which the Jesuits and Sulpicians might supply, but who may also obtain there books proscribed by the Index, and even such books as invited the condemnation of the *Institut Canadien*. The *Institut*, however, still exists in name, and meets once a year for the election of

officers. At the last meeting there were three members present. It was a long chase, but the Church was in at the death.[1]

[1] The material in this and the preceding chapter has been gathered mainly from the newspapers and periodicals of the time, and from a pamphlet issued from the office of the Montreal *Witness* in 1875, entitled "History of the Guibord Case; Ultramontanism versus Law and Human Rights." The writer of the pamphlet is, no doubt, unfriendly to the Ultramontanes. The *Witness*, like *Le Pays*, was condemned by Bishop Bourget.



CHAPTER IV

QUEBEC AT THE UNION

WHEN Mr. Laurier began the practice of law at Montreal, political conditions in Canada were thoroughly unsettled. George E. Cartier had joined hands with John A. Macdonald and George Brown to promote Confederation, while the leaders of the Liberal party in Quebec had broken with their old allies of Upper Canada, and assumed the leadership of the forces opposed to the coalition and to Confederation. There was something pathetic in the separation of Brown and Dorion. With a fine and beautiful chivalry Dorion had borne with Brown's harsh and inconsiderate attacks upon his church, his race, and his province, and had set the great public objects which they had in common far above private resentments and momentary irritations. The policy of Brown doomed Dorion to a hopeless struggle in his own province, and shut him out even from the sympathetic regard of the mass of his compatriots. His authority declined. He suffered personal defeat. He was superseded in the leadership of his own party in Lower Canada. But despite defeat and contumely, loss of influence, and exclusion from office, his allegiance to Brown remained unshaken, and no word of

reproach or of protest passed his lips. United by a positive personal affection, and bound to a common programme, the two men held together with simple good faith and unflinching tenacity; and the chivalry of Dorion was the seal of the compact.

Canada has had few nobler public servants than Antoine Dorion. A man of magnanimous spirit, of beautiful character, and of rare sagacity, he fought through a long public career, in a bitter and factious time, without a stain upon his shield, unsoured by reverses, and untouched by sordid bargainings for the spoils or the dignities of office. Though small in stature, his was still a commanding presence, and though his manner was grave and restrained, his gracious bearing invited approach and confidence, while the music of his voice, the nobility of his face, and his clear and reasoned utterance, gave grace and authority to all that he said in the private circle, in the court-room, and from the platform. A statesman hardly less great than any that Canada has produced, he was also a great advocate, and he furnishes an unusual instance of authority at the bar unimpaired by continuous absorption in politics. Formidable as he was in Parliament and on the political platform, his heart was probably always in his profession rather than in the business of the State, and it was fitting that he should close his career as Chief-Justice of his native province. His separation from Brown and

the Liberals of Upper Canada was of short duration. He opposed the terms rather than the idea of Confederation, and when the union was accomplished, and Mr. Brown had withdrawn from the Coalition Government, all sections of the Liberal party reunited under the leadership of Brown and Mackenzie in Ontario, and of Dorion and Holton in Quebec. It may be that the heartiness of the old understanding between Brown and Dorion was never quite restored, but to the last they entertained for each other a sincere friendship and a great respect, and no sincerer or more impressive mourner stood before the open grave of George Brown than Sir Antoine Dorion.[1]

It was not by the French Liberals alone that the terms of the union were condemned in Quebec. Dorion, the French Catholic, was joined by Joly, the French Protestant, while Holton and Dunkin and Huntington, who ranked with Galt as leaders

[1] The famous "Joe" Rymal, of Wentworth, who, by the way, opposed Confederation, in a speech at the Reform Convention of 1867, said: "The Reformers of Upper Canada were called upon to express all the gratitude possible for the manner in which the Lower Canadian leaders had stood by them. Of Mr. Dorion no one had cause to complain. If there had been a statesman in the Canadian Legislature for the past ten years—if there had been an honest politician in the whole box and dice of them—Mr. Dorion was the man. When he was enticed to sin he would not consent—he would not follow the multitude to do evil. If there was one thing which, more than anything else, made coalition distasteful, it was the fact that these men whom we were forced to respect had been excluded. None of them went in, and, thank God, none of them had to go out."

of the English minority in the Lower Province, alike opposed Confederation on the basis of the resolutions of the Quebec Conference. Cartier, with excellent temper and just enough of extravagance to season the observation, declared during the Confederation debates that the Quebec resolutions were accepted by all men of moderate opinions, and opposed by socialists, democrats, and annexationists. He said the *Institut Canadien* had constituted itself a champion of religion, and professed to fear that the religious rights of French Canadians would suffer under the new arrangement. The Montreal *Witness*, a mouthpiece of English Protestantism, contended that under Confederation the British Protestant minority would lie at the mercy of the French Canadians; while the *True Witness*, founded to defend the Roman Catholic Church against the attacks of John Dougall's paper, held that if Confederation were established, the French Canadians would be doomed and their nationality and religion destroyed.[1]

This is perhaps an exaggerated and partisan account of the situation, but it is nevertheless true that all these extreme elements were united against the project of union accepted by the Coalition Government. Holton and Huntington were greatly concerned to provide adequate protection for the educational and religious rights of the Protestant minority in Quebec; Cartier was equally deter-

[1] "Confederation Debates," page 61.

mined to guarantee the separate schools of the Catholic minority in Ontario and the other English provinces; while a group of the younger and more aggressive French Liberals of Quebec, under the leadership of Dorion, if not quite of the spirit of Dorion, denounced Confederation as a conspiracy to anglicize French Canada and place French Canadians at the mercy of a majority hostile to their religious and national rights. They argued that the provision in the new Constitution for a federal veto over provincial legislation, and the power granted to the English provinces to increase their representation according to population, while Lower Canada was condemned to a stationary representation, would subject French Canadians to the rule of a majority that would forever increase, and sooner or later invite conflicts which must destroy the political influence of the French element in Lower Canada. It was, in short, contended upon the one hand that French Canadian nationality and the privileges of the Catholic Church would be imperilled by Confederation, and upon the other, that English nationality and the educational and religious rights of Protestants would be exposed to danger in Lower Canada under the provincial Government. It was in order to provide against these conflicting dangers that the educational clauses were inserted in the Confederation agreement, mainly under the direction and inspiration of A. T. Galt, and that Cartier and Brown

successfully contended against John A. Macdonald for a federal rather than a legislative union.[1]

The most convincing and destructive arguments against the plan of Confederation were made by Mr. Dunkin and Mr. Dorion. Dunkin's speech occupied two days in delivery, and must always rank as a great contribution to the political literature of Canada. It is a grave and scholarly treatment of many phases of the controversy, elevated in tone and invincibly honest in premise and conclusion. It is the speech of a pessimist, but of a pessimist under severe restraint; the speech of a man deter-

[1] Mr. A. T. Galt was a son of John Galt, the author and founder of the Canada Land Company. He spent his early years in the service of the company, and was one of the pioneer railway and steamship promoters of Canada. He first entered Parliament as member for Sherbrooke in 1849. He was Inspector-General in the Cartier-Macdonald Government and Minister of Finance in the Coalition Government organized to carry Confederation. He withdrew from the Government in 1866 on account of its failure to pass legislation securing to the English minority of Lower Canada a fair share of the public funds for Protestant schools and a Protestant Board of Education. Later, however, Galt consented to be one of the delegates to Great Britain to perfect the scheme of Confederation, on satisfactory pledges from John A. Macdonald and his fellow delegates that the rights of the Protestant minority of Quebec would receive adequate protection. In fulfilment of this pledge, the clauses guaranteeing Protestant schools to the Quebec minority, and Separate schools to the Catholic minority of Ontario were inserted in the British North America Act.

Edward Goff Penny, editor of the Montreal *Herald*, and afterwards a Dominion Senator, in a pamphlet issued in 1867 entitled "The Proposed British North American Confederation: Why it Should not be Imposed upon the Colonies by Imperial Legislation," said: "After the Confederation scheme had taken the form of the Quebec Constitution, a fear was entertained that it would meet with opposition from a majority in

mined to eschew the cant and buncombe of parish politics, and reason upon high grounds to logical results. Much that he predicted has come to pass with consequences the reverse of what he expected, and many of his conclusions have been discredited by events. The acquisition of the West, the admission of British Columbia into the Confederation, and the construction of a railway from older Canada across the Rocky Mountains and on to the Pacific sea, in which he foresaw ruin and bankruptcy, and classed among the wild dreams of optimistic visionaries, are accomplished facts, and the fabric of the

Lower Canada—one of the intended members of the Confederation. This majority was likely to be composed of two elements; one being the representatives of the isolated English-speaking and Protestant populations of Canada East. These gentlemen saw clearly that, cut off from Protestant Upper Canada, they would lose all influence in the legislation upon such subjects as were to be committed to the local legislature, and their experience did not reassure them as to the consequences, especially in matters connected with schools, where differences of nationality are likely to be widened by difference of religion. In order to prevent them from voting against the measure, therefore, it was thought necessary to give them guarantees: but as the avowal of that intention would have probably destroyed the Catholic majority, the adhesion of the Protestant members was retained by a secret and confidential letter addressed to one of them by the Finance Minister on behalf of his colleagues, containing a promise that the required security should be given in the local Constitution which was to be enacted in the next session—a promise which, when the time came, was broken, for the same reason which made it necessary to keep it secret when it was given. The writer has no belief in the efficacy of any such special guarantees in favour of a class under a system of popular government. He does not complain, therefore, that the promise made was not kept; but he records the fact to show the unconstitutionality, and irregularity, and deception which has tainted the prosecution of this design from the beginning and throughout."

union stands strong and unimpaired. It is just as true, however, that he accurately foretold many of the shifts and expedients, in violation of the terms of union, that have been employed to conciliate dissatisfied communities; and warned with the voice of a prophet, against the invitation to excessive provincial expenditures concealed in the arrangement for subsidizing the provinces out of the federal treasury; against the temptation to provide local works at the national expense, for party rather than for national purposes; and against the conflicting sectional, racial, and sectarian elements, which would demand representation in the federal Cabinet. The speech fails in that it is purely destructive, and while accepting the legislative union of Upper and Lower Canada as a desirable condition, offers no remedy for the humiliating breakdown in government which precipitated the negotiations for Confederation, and neglects altogether to suggest any alternative for the system of provincial subsidies, which were the only substantial compensation to the provinces for the surrender of customs duties, and would seem to have been an absolute necessity to the creation of the Commonwealth.[1]

Mr. Holton and Mr. Joly canvassed the agreement with skill and prevision, but their speeches do not show the insight and power of Dorion. Joly accepted the contention that Confederation would be fatal to the interests of Lower Canada, and in

[1] "Confederation Debates," pages 482, 544.

view of his Protestant faith and his subsequent dealing with racial and religious agitations the grounds of his antagonism are remarkable. For example he said: "I object to the proposed Confederation, first as a Canadian, without reference to origin, and secondly as a French Canadian. From either point of view I look upon the measure as a fatal error, and as a French Canadian I once more appeal to my fellow countrymen, reminding them of the precious inheritance confided to their keeping —an inheritance sanctified by the blood of their fathers, and which it is their duty to hand down to their children as unimpaired as they received it."[1] Notwithstanding this declaration, no one will find in Mr. Joly's long and distinguished career anything savouring of a narrow racialism, or other than frank acceptance of all the obligations, and courageous performance of all the duties, of a robust Canadian citizenship.

Mr. Holton condemned the project of union submitted from the Quebec Conference as premature and immature. He contended for adequate guarantees for the educational rights of the English minority in Quebec. He held that the cost of defence would be greatly and burdensomely increased. He objected to the construction of the Intercolonial Railway over the route suggested, and insisted that the cost must materially exceed the estimates, and that the Upper Provinces could receive no adequate return for the

[1] "Confederation Debates," page 362.

money that would be sunk in the undertaking. He was dissatisfied also with the proposed distribution of the public debt among the various provinces, and argued generally that Upper and Lower Canada must bear an inordinate share of the burdens of the new commonwealth, and that under existing circumstances to shoulder the obligations and assume the responsibilities which the new arrangement involved must prejudice all the future of the British Colonies in North America.[1]

Mr. Dorion penetrated the new Constitution with the eye of a seer and the prescience of a statesman. He declared himself in favour of a confederation of Upper and Lower Canada, but was against the inclusion of the Eastern Provinces upon the onerous terms proposed. In fact, Mr. Dorion, as far back as 1856, had suggested the substitution of a confederation of the two Canadas for the existing legislative union, and in 1859 he had joined with Dessaulles, Drummond and McGee, in a manifesto which declared that a change in the Constitution of the country was necessary, and that "the logical alternative now presented to the people of Lower Canada would, therefore, seem to be dissolution or federation on the one hand, and representation according to population on the other." He had said also in 1861 that the time might come when it would be necessary to have a confederation of all the provinces, but he could not think that time had

[1] "Confederation Debates," pages 17, 148, 661, 704, 769, 940.

yet arrived. This position he now maintained. He was still favourable to a federal union of Upper and Lower Canada, but he could not accept the wider scheme of Confederation, with its excessive financial generosity to the Eastern Provinces. These terms would impose greatly increased taxation upon Upper and Lower Canada, and bring no compensating advantages. He protested against the great cost of constructing the Intercolonial Railway, and insisted that the route should be definitely determined, before the country was hopelessly committed to Confederation. He predicted heavy and increasing expenditures for defence, and mainly for the advantage of the Eastern Provinces, as under the terms proposed ten-twelfths of the cost of defence must be borne by the two Canadas. He was opposed to a nominated Senate, and pointed out that the Upper Chamber, if the plan of selection from the existing Legislative Councils were adopted, would be filled with the nominees of four provincial Conservative Governments. It would take a century to secure a Liberal majority in a Senate thus constituted, and the appointed Chamber would exist as a menace and obstruction to Liberal legislation.[1] He objected also to the large powers of veto vested in the Federal Government, and saw in this feature of the Constitution a certain source of conflict between the local and central authorities. He

[1] From 1878 to 1902 no Liberal was appointed to the chairmanship of a Senate Committee.

argued that friction and confusion must arise under the provision which gave to federal ministers the nomination and maintenance of judges, while the Legislatures controlled the constitution of the courts, and determined the number of judges to be appointed. The whole project, he contended, was designed to end in a legislative union, and assimilate the whole people to the dominant population. He therefore demanded that the question of Confederation, and the terms upon which it was proposed to establish the new commonwealth, should be submitted to the people, or Parliament dissolved and the members required to go back to their constituencies for approval of their course, before the basis of union was finally ratified.[1]

It will be admitted that Mr. Dorion touched many of the weak spots in the new Constitution, and that many of the conflicts which he foresaw have arisen in the practical working of the instrument. If these conflicts were less destructive than he predicted, it is because Liberal statesmen and Canadian and Imperial judges have maintained the federal character of the Constitution, and widened rather than restricted the legislative sphere of the provinces. Thus far, however, his forebodings for the French Canadian people have had slight verification, for it is hardly an exaggeration to say that no Government has existed since Confederation which was not supported by a majority of the

[1] "Confederation Debates," pages 245, 269.

constituencies of Quebec, and was not charged with subserviency to the French province. Racial and religious minorities almost invariably exercise their full political weight under a system of popular government.

It will be remembered that Mr. John Sandfield Macdonald and Mr. Malcolm Cameron, both influential and distinguished among the public men of Upper Canada, joined Dorion and his Quebec allies in their resistance to Confederation, and Joseph Howe, of Nova Scotia, conducted a violent and inflammatory campaign against ratification of the terms of union without submission to the people. John Sandfield Macdonald argued well for a plebiscite, but in dealing with the actual propositions before Parliament he was often ineffective and inconclusive. He rather stood aside with a sneer on his face, and in much that he said there was something very like contempt for the plans and prophecies of the builders of Confederation. This was his mood all through life. He had the patience and the determination to do good work with the tools in hand, but he had no heart for the fashioning of new implements, and seemed to feel that constitution-mongering was a pastime for theorists rather than the practical business of governing statesmen. Although a Roman Catholic, he was, in the main, hostile to separate schools, and, notwithstanding his acceptance of the Scott measure extending the privileges of separate schools in Ontario, he offered

an amendment during the Confederation debates vesting in the provincial Legislatures the absolute authority over education.[1]

It is more surprising that Mr. John Hillyard Cameron, who had some claims to leadership in the Orange Conservative element of Upper Canada, and was himself a supporter of the Quebec resolutions, should have joined Dorion and John Sandfield Macdonald in the demand for a constitutional appeal to the people before the resolutions were submitted for final action to the Imperial Parliament, and should have actually offered an amendment to that effect.[2] The action must have been displeasing to John A. Macdonald, and particularly as it was so acceptable to the opponents of Confederation. The Conservative leader refrained, however, from any manifestation of his displeasure, and in discussing the amendment treated Mr. Cameron with scrupulous courtesy and respect.[3]

In fact, nowhere does John A. Macdonald show to better advantage than during the Confederation

[1] "Confederation Debates," page 1026.

[2] "Confederation Debates," pages 962, 975.

[3] John A. Macdonald described Hillyard Cameron's speech as an eloquent and convincing argument for Confederation. John Sandfield Macdonald interrupted with the remark, "What a compliment!" John A. retorted, "It may be a compliment, but it is not flattery. A compliment is the statement of an agreeable truth; flattery is the statement of an agreeable untruth. Now, were I to state that the honourable member for Cornwall delivered an eloquent and convincing speech, that would be flattery, but when I state in all sincerity, that the speech of the honourable member for Peel was an eloquent and convincing one, I may compliment, but I do not flatter."

debates. This may be said with equal truth of Brown and Cartier. They were firm in purpose, resourceful in appeal and argument, and thoroughly equal to any situation which the controversy developed. They were likewise uniformly courteous and conciliatory, manifestly conscious of the gravity of the issues under consideration, and profoundly concerned to carry the great business to a successful and honourable conclusion. No one risked more than Cartier. No one like Cartier was under suspicion among his own people and confronted by a hostile sentiment in his own province. No one, perhaps, was more influential in determining the character of the federal constitution. He put into that instrument the principles of constitutional government which he had learned in the school of Papineau, and fought for in the Rebellion of 1837; and he established against successful legal or political assault the ample constitutional powers of the provinces. No doubt Cartier's chief reliance against the rising tide of hostile sentiment in Quebec, was in the Catholic clergy. These were distinctly favourable to the scheme of union, and the fact has profound significance in the making of confederated Canada. Without Cartier and the Catholic ecclesiastics of Quebec, the union of 1867 could not have been accomplished.

The demand for a plebiscite on the scheme of Confederation was very strongly supported in Lower Canada. A score of French Canadian coun-

ties passed resolutions to that effect, and petitions against final action in advance of a popular vote, signed by more than twenty thousand persons, were sent in to Parliament. Many public meetings were held throughout the province, at which addresses were made by A. A. Dorion, L. O. David, Médéric Lanctôt. J. B. E. Dorion, and other active opponents of the plan of Confederation. Mr. Laurier spoke at one of these meetings, held at Ste. Julie in Montcalm County, on February 22nd, 1865. *Le Pays* fails to give a summary of the speech, but says that he supported the arguments of other speakers, and that resolutions against Confederation, or at least declaratory of the policy of Dorion, were unanimously adopted.

During all but a few months of the two years that Mr. Laurier practised law at Montreal he was the junior partner of M. Lanctôt, one of the chief agitators against Confederation. Upon his admission to the bar in October, 1864, he formed a partnership with Oscar Archambault and Henri L. Desaulniers, under the firm name of Laurier, Archambault, and Desaulniers. All three had passed through McGill together, and Laurier and Desaulniers had ranked equal for the degree of B.C.L. This partnership was more agreeable than profitable. They found that clients came slowly, and that it was a considerable undertaking for even three brilliant young students to build up a law business in Montreal. The firm was therefore

dissolved, and in April, 1865, Mr. Laurier entered into partnership with Lanctôt. Of the members of his first firm only himself survives.

The association with Lanctôt was probably not wholly conducive to the natural development of Mr. Laurier's character. Lanctôt was a fiery and turbulent politician, of that class who come uppermost in seasons of great social and political unrest, urge extreme remedies for evils they unconsciously magnify, command the noisy adherence of an evanescent faction, and then pass into obscurity and neglect as conditions settle and the saner forces of the community regain control. His father was a notary of St. Remi, who was arrested in 1838 for the part he took in the Rebellion, and exiled for many years to Australia. The son was born a few weeks before his father's deportation, and inherited the father's spirit and the father's temperament. He studied law with Joseph Doutre, and at twenty years of age was selected to edit *Le Pays*. In 1860 he resigned his editorial office, and established himself as an advocate. Still later he founded *La Presse*, and in 1865, in order to retain his clients, took Mr. Laurier into partnership. Lanctôt plunged into the agitation against Confederation, and in association with L. A. Jetté, Desiré Girouard, L. O. David, and other young and aggressive spirits, established *L'Union Nationale* as the chief organ of the anti-union movement. Mr. Jetté, as was said elsewhere, is now Sir Louis Jetté,

Lieutenant-Governor of Quebec; Mr. Girouard, after many years of distinguished service in the House of Commons, is a judge of the Supreme Court of Canada, and Mr. David, the life-long friend of Mr. Laurier, is City Clerk of Montreal. In 1867 Lanctôt ran for Parliament for Montreal East against Cartier, but was defeated, and subsequently was ruined by unwise and venturesome speculation. He then went to the United States, changed his religion, established a Protestant paper, and made strenuous war upon the Catholic Church. This, like so many other of his journalistic ventures, had a short life, and he was soon back in Montreal. He formed new political alliances, and supported Cartier against Jetté in 1872, when the Conservative leader was defeated by 1,300. In 1875 he assumed the editorship of the *Courrier* of Ottawa, and afterwards became a stenographer for the House of Commons. When he died in 1877 he was but thirty-nine years of age. He was an able advocate, a capable journalist, and a political orator of remarkable skill and power. But, as the brief record shows, he was unsteady, erratic, and violent, carried on from extreme to extreme by the passions and prejudices of the moment, and often at the mercy of his greed for power, fortune and popularity.[1]

During the brief term of Lanctôt's partnership

[1] See a sketch of Médéric Lanctôt in "Mes Contemporains," by L. O. David.

with Mr. Laurier the firm's clients were received in the editorial offices of *L'Union Nationale*, and Mr. Laurier seems to have devoted himself chiefly to their interests and to the prosecution of his profession. He seldom contributed to the paper, and had no responsibility for its policy on public questions. The office of *L'Union Nationale* was on the first floor of an old house on Ste. Thérèse street, long since demolished and replaced by a more modern structure. Though it was a breeding place of faction and a nursery of extreme opinions, all the confusion and clamour, all the shouting and stamping, had no enduring, if indeed any temporary, effect upon Mr. Laurier's opinions, and still less upon his manner and character. He could not adopt the ways of even sincere demagogism, and his admirable balance of mind and temper kept him from intemperate courses and rash decisions.

Although surrounded by an atmosphere of political pessimism as well as of racial narrowness, he spoke even then the language of fervent Canadian patriotism that he speaks to-day. Since his earliest utterances he has never said a word that breathes the spirit of racial bigotry, or warms the idea of a separate national existence for the people of Quebec. He seems to have acquired at a very early age a singularly clear grasp of the main principles of free parliamentary government, and there is a remarkable maturity in his earliest appreciations of the spirit and efficiency of British institutions.

It was here that Mr. Laurier was first introduced to Dr. Fréchette. One day, writes Dr. Fréchette in a sketch of Mr. Laurier which appeared some years ago, as the junior partner was leaving the office on the way to the Court House, Lanctôt said, "Let me introduce you to M. Laurier, my partner in this struggling firm of lawyers. A future Minister!" Laurier smiled, exchanged a few pleasant words with Dr. Fréchette, and passed out. When he had gone Lanctôt added with enthusiasm, "There is a head for you! Did you notice it? The young man who has it on his shoulders is sure to make himself heard of yet in the world. Why, sir, he is a poet, an orator, a philosopher, a jurist—I cannot pretend to enumerate all his talents; but mark my words, he is a coming man. Do not forget that face."[1]

He was as much a student during these years at Montreal and later at Arthabaskaville as he had been at L'Assomption College and at McGill. His mastery of the English tongue and love of English books greatly influenced his character and opinions. At this time he spoke and wrote chiefly in French, while he read in English and even thought in English. This implied no lack of love for the brilliant language of literature and diplomacy which was his birthright. He has always reverenced his native tongue, and facing an unsympathetic Parliament on a memorable occasion in the mid-stream of his political career he uttered the fine sentence,

[1] Taché's "Men of the Day," 2nd series, page 18.

"So long as there are French mothers the language will not die."[1] But he was quick to recognize the fact that on this continent English must be the language of commerce, of politics, and of literature, and that a command of English speech was essential to full and effective participation in the life of the community. Even in youth he had to meet the taunt that he spoke French with an English accent, and it was sought to use the gibe to his discredit among his compatriots. But he smiled at such attacks, perseveringly perfected himself in English, and knew well that he was steadily increasing his capital both as a lawyer and as a politician. He derived his knowledge of English mainly from the study of English books, and from the habit of thinking in English. It is said that he translated from the French into English all of Shakespeare and much of Milton, while he has dipped deeply into English poetry and the great English essayists, and has devoted long and laborious study to the choicest specimens of English oratory. He is fond of Burns and of Tennyson. Bright's speeches he knows as they are known to few English readers. Macaulay's history and essays are among his favourite studies. He finds an enduring charm in Mr. Goldwin Smith's simple and exquisite English. Lincoln's speech at Gettysburg and the second Inaugural he ranks among English classics, and perhaps no other career in history has taken such

[1] "Hansard," March 16th, 1886, page 180.

hold upon his heart and imagination as that of the inspired and martyred President. He has read every book that has ever appeared dealing with that strange priest and prophet of the common people; and though of far finer texture than Lincoln, his own life and character reveal something of the patient purpose and silent, strenuous endeavour, which distinguished the American President.

CHAPTER V

IN LAW AND IN JOURNALISM

MR. LAURIER did not easily overcome his vagrant tendency towards journalism and literature. According to Dr. Fréchette, he began to publish, while at Montreal, "a narrative, half tale, half legend, written in clear and vigorous style, and containing a mingling of interesting historical details with sketches of men and manners, which disclosed a most original faculty of observation, together with a rare mastery of our language."[1] This sketch was written in French and appeared in *L'Indépendance Nationale.* As Dr. Fréchette surmises, it was never completed, and the story and the journal in which it was printed are alike forgotten.

Mr. Laurier was now greatly affected by weakness of the lungs, and in order to fight the progress of the disease it was deemed essential that he should leave Montreal. Mr. David in "Mes Contemporains" says, "I seem to see Laurier as he was at that period; ill, sad, grave, indifferent to all the uproar round about him, he passed in our midst like a shadow." Mr. J. B. E. Dorion, or Eric Dorion, as he was familiarly called, had just died

[1] Taché's "Men of the Day," 2nd series, page 18.

at L'Avenir, and his paper, *Le Défricheur*, was likely to cease publication. Mr. Laurier saw a chance to combine law and journalism, so he formed a partnership with M. Guitte, a printer of St. Hyacinthe, and bought the paper.

The man whom Mr. Laurier succeeded in the publication of *Le Défricheur* was as remarkable in his way as Lanctôt, but had a steadiness of aim and a resolution of purpose which Lanctôt wholly lacked. Eric Dorion's father was a member of the Assembly under the Constitution of 1791. He was the sixth child, and among his brothers were Sir Antoine Dorion and Judge Wilfrid Dorion. The elder sons were educated at Nicolet College, but ill fortune overtook the family, and at fourteen years of age Eric was thrown upon his own resources. In 1843 he started a paper at Three Rivers, but the venture did not succeed, and in 1849 he founded *L'Avenir* in Montreal.

Perhaps no such revolutionary programme has ever been advocated elsewhere in Canada as that championed by *L'Avenir*. It was the organ of the *Rouge* platform adopted in 1848 by a group of young French Radicals, among whom Doutre, Laflamme, Papin, Laberge, and Eric Dorion were conspicuous. They gave at first an uneasy support to Lafontaine, but when Papineau returned from exile, re-entered public life, quarrelled with Lafontaine, attacked the constitutional settlement of 1841, and declared for republican institutions, they

deserted the more conservative statesman, and accepted Papineau's irresponsible and revolutionary leadership. Their programme covered a great list of political and educational reforms, and demanded repeal of the union and a republican form of government. They were hostile also to a State religion, and some among them even to any form of religion, and they looked to union with the United States as the natural and preferable political destiny of the British American provinces. Papineau himself gave his support to the annexation movement of 1849, and in 1850 voted in Parliament to receive a petition in favour of Canadian independence.

The programme was advocated by Dorion in *L'Avenir* with passionate and reckless enthusiasm, and from time to time between 1848 and 1853, new measures are recommended, and luminous expositions of the various propositions fill its columns. On January 4th, 1850, as manager of *L'Avenir*, he issued an address to the people of Quebec, and the programme seems then to have been well developed. In subsequent issues he deals with its various planks, and it is often republished and strenuously commended to public consideration. In the issue for May 21st, 1851, the programme appears in *L'Avenir* over Dorion's signature, and he points out in the introductory sentences that the year promises to be fruitful in struggle and in vigorous work for the French democracy. The people, he

says, will soon be called upon to elect their representatives in the Legislative Assembly, and the Democrats will require to use all their energy and all their strength in order that they may be represented by men sincerely devoted to the popular interests, and determined in their soul and conscience to obtain for Canada the social and political reforms of which she is so badly in need. He says that with a view of suggesting to the Democrats a collection of some of the measures which they should urge at the next general election, *L'Avenir* publishes the programme which always has been, and will always continue to be, the programme of that journal. He invites "all the friends of progress to put themselves in frequent communication with the editors on all the questions which might concern the coming elections, and particularly such questions as the candidates of the different political parties, their means of success, and the discussions and results of the meetings held in parish and county; in one word, all that may interest the parties to the cause that we defend."

The programme as it appears in this issue of *L'Avenir*, declares that education should be as widespread as possible; asks for progress in agriculture and for the establishment of model farms; favours colonization of uncultivated lands within reach of the poorer classes; demands free navigation of the St. Lawrence; as free exchange of products as possible; reform of the judicature, decentrali-

zation of the judiciary, and codification of the laws; postal reform, and the free circulation of newspapers; a less expensive administration of government than existed, with reduction of salaries in all the branches of the Civil Service, and a reduction in the number of employees; creation of parish municipalities; decentralization of power; elective institutions in all their fullness; an elective Governor; an elective Legislative Council; an elective magistracy; election of all the heads of public departments; electoral reform based on population; universal suffrage; the summoning and duration of Parliament to be fixed by law; prohibition by special statute of the representatives of the people accepting offices of emolument under the Crown during the exercise of their mandate, and until one year after its expiration; abolition of the seignorial tenure; abolition of the tithe system; abolition of the Protestant Clergy Reserves; abolition of the system of State pensions; abolition of the privileges of lawyers, and freedom for every man to defend his own case; equal rights and equal justice for all citizens; repeal of the union; and finally, and above all, the independence of Canada, and its annexation to the United States. "This," says Dorion, "is what we ask. This is what we will ask always and unceasingly until these improvements and changes, these liberties, have been granted to the Canadian people. Without these liberties, without these reforms and many others, there is no

salvation for our people. As long as an antiquated and corrupt Government will refuse these, we consider that there should be no inaction and no rest for any friend of this country. And so long as the people have not compelled on the electoral platform the recognition of their undeniable rights, they will always resemble a band of helots, that some men may exploit for their own profit and lead where they please without their knowing why or how." It may be mentioned that upon this platform Dorion unsuccessfully contested Chambly for a seat in Parliament, and that during this year *L'Avenir* ceased publication.

La Minerve, the Conservative and clerical organ, said that the *Rouge* party was formed in hatred of English institutions, of the Constitution which it declared to be vicious, and of responsible government, which it thought to be a farce; that it proclaimed revolutionary ideas in religion and politics, was inspired by a profound hatred of the clergy, and formally avowed the intention of annexing Canada to the United States. Dorion's platform sustains the indictment. The authors of the programme, in fact, adopted many of the opinions of the revolutionary agitators of old France, who had just established the Second Republic on the final ruin of the Bourbons, and some of the chief spokesmen of the group exhibited all the enthusiasm, the extravagance, the effervescent optimism, and reckless irresponsibility of their continental proto-

types. They contributed, however, to the achievement of many necessary and useful reforms. It is true, as Mrs. Humphry Ward teaches in "Marcella," that political extremists improve the old rather than create new conditions. Many of these young *Rouges* sobered and steadied as the years passed, and ripened into moderate and responsible statesmen, while they remained "strenuous to the uttermost of liberty." But for the time they put the Liberal party of Quebec under suspicion of the more conservative elements of the community, they widened the breach between the French and English populations, and they arrayed against the Liberal party the tremendous force of the Roman Catholic Church.

Eric Dorion was one of the founders of the *Institut Canadien* at Montreal and a persistent advocate of popular education. He was active in organizing branches of the *Institut* throughout Quebec, and his fiery zeal and invincible enthusiasm were powerfully enlisted in the desperate struggle with Bishop Bourget. It was in the prosecution of this burning controversy that he was named "*L'Enfant Terrible*," and the term fitted his thin frame and delicate features so admirably that it clung to him as long as he lived. He was as deeply interested in colonization and in farming as in education, and in order to stimulate to better methods of agriculture in Quebec, he founded a model French colony in the Township of Durham. He called the colony

L'Avenir, either after his paper or as significant of "the future."

It is characteristic of the man that he should have established his colony in the centre of an English population, and should have selected a township called Durham. Many of the more aggressive leaders among the French people resented the tone of Lord Durham's report of 1839, and particularly the statements that Lower Canada must be governed by the English element, and that the only power that could obliterate the nationality of the French Canadians would be that of the numerical majority of a loyal and contented English population. It will be remembered that Lord Durham had described the French Canadians as an old and stationary society in a new and progressive world, and said: "The institutions of France, during the colonization of Canada, were, perhaps, more than those of any other European nation, calculated to repress the intelligence and freedom of the great mass of the people. Those institutions followed the Canadian colonist across the Atlantic. The same central, ill-organized, unimproving, and repressing despotism extended over him. Not merely was he allowed no voice in the government of his province or the choice of his rulers, but he was not even permitted to associate with his neighbours for the regulation of those municipal affairs which the central authority neglected under the pretext of managing. He obtained his land on a tenure singu-

larly calculated to promote his immediate comfort, and to check his desire to better his condition; he was placed at once in a life of constant and unvarying labour, of great material comfort and feudal dependence. The ecclesiastical authority to which he had been accustomed established its institutions around him, and the priest continued to exercise over him his ancient influence. No general provision was made for education; and, as its necessity was not appreciated, the colonist made no attempt to repair the negligence of the Government. It need not surprise us that, under such circumstances, a race of men habituated to the incessant labour of a rude and unskilled agriculture, and habitually fond of social enjoyments, congregated together in rural communities, occupying portions of the wholly unappropriated soil, sufficient to provide each family with material comforts, far beyond their ancient means, or almost their conceptions; that they made little advance beyond their first progress in comfort, which the bounty of the soil absolutely forced upon them; that under the same institutions they remained the same uninstructed, inactive, unprogressive people."[1]

Eric Dorion laboured to remove these reproaches, to preserve French Canadian nationality, and to rouse the spirit of emulation and enterprise in the French population. It was in direct pursuance of

[1] "Report and Despatches of the Earl of Durham," London, 1839, pages 16, 17.

these objects that he established his French colony in Durham, and undertook to supply a practical example of progressive agriculture in the face of an English community. One of his first performances in the new colony was to build a church with his own hands in order to show that he was opposed, not to the Church as a moral and religious institution, but to its intermeddling in public affairs, and practical patronage of popular ignorance. In 1854 he was elected to Parliament for Drummond and Arthabaska, and was re-elected in 1861, and 1863. In 1862 he founded *Le Défricheur*. The word "défricher" means "to turn up the virgin soil" and "Défricheur" may be translated "settler." It was not so translated, however, by one of the speakers during the Confederation debates. Mr. Denis took the word to mean "clearing" and declared that the paper had never cleared anything except government advertisements when the elder Dorion was Attorney-General for Lower Canada.[1] Eric Dorion opposed Confederation, and his speech in the House is remarkable for a philosophical examination of the position Quebec would occupy as a state of the American Union, and the contention that Confederation must tend to drive Canada into the arms of the Republic.[2] In *Le Défricheur*, however, he sought mainly to inculcate habits of thrift and

[1] Paul Denis, M.P. for Beauharnois, in the "Confederation Debates," page 879.

[2] "Confederation Debates," pages 856, 871.

industry, to establish the dignity of labour, and to awaken the people to the necessity for better educational methods, and the more general diffusion of intelligence. The early fervour of his spirit had passed, and he avoided the semi-religious topics which led to conflicts with the Church and invited clerical interference in political contests. He died in 1866, and *Le Défricheur* passed into the hands of Mr. Laurier.

In the winter of 1866, Mr. Laurier left Montreal to take charge of the paper. He received his first public banquet on the eve of his departure. His plans seem to have been well matured. He had decided to open a law office at Arthabaskaville, and to remove *Le Défricheur* to the seat of the judicial district. The first issue of *Le Défricheur* under the new management appeared on November 28th, 1866, and its publication was continued at L'Avenir, until the first weeks of 1867, when the plant was removed to Arthabaskaville. *Le Pays* of December 11th, 1866, says: "*Le Défricheur* has resumed its regular publication. Mr. Laurier, if we may judge by his programme, while retaining in *Le Défricheur* its spirit, its turn of thought, and occupying himself, as did Dorion, with political economy, agriculture and industrial education, will give to it all the literary care for which Dorion had no time. Mr. Laurier knows well the political history of Canada; he is a sincere and enlightened patriot, distrusting exaggeration and false Liberal-

ism as much as mere routine; he is studious and subdued; he is an energetic and distinguished writer; his views are broad, his mind upright and loyal; in a word, he is one of the most solid, and at the same time most brilliant young men we know. With all his qualities, and moreover, his legal mind and love of work, Mr. Laurier is in a position to render important services to the Eastern Townships and to the Liberal party while preparing himself for a glorious career."

Le Défricheur, however, was on the verge of collapse when Dorion died, and Mr. Laurier could not command the capital necessary to repair its broken fortunes. The utmost that he could do was to postpone the burial for a season. Besides, the liberal spirit of his writing brought down upon *Le Défricheur* the censure of Bishop Laflèche, of Three Rivers, and many of his clergy; and under the circumstances of the moment he was powerless to wage successful battle against the strong arm of the Church. After a few months of struggle, the effort to maintain the paper was abandoned in April, 1867, and Mr. Laurier was free to devote himself to the practice of his profession. But he had more than his share of ill fortune at this period. Just as *Le Défricheur* succumbed he was stricken with a serious illness, and many weeks passed before he was restored to anything like physical vigour. Even if *Le Défricheur* had lived, Mr. Laurier would probably have found it difficult to maintain an

active interest in its publication. He could not be expected to settle down to the unromantic drudgery of rural journalism, and absorption in editorial duties could only have diverted attention from his profession. He was finding himself in those days, and the brief experience with *Le Défricheur* was at best but a halt by the wayside. Many a young advocate in other provinces than Quebec has found his first earnings at the bar pitifully inconsequential, and has dreamed of by-paths to fame and fortune. It is unfortunate that the files of *Le Défricheur* were accidentally destroyed by fire many years ago, and it is therefore impossible to quote at length from Mr. Laurier's editorial writings in exposition of the views he then held on social, economic and political questions, and the temper and method of his journalism.

One, however, and it is believed, one only copy of *Le Défricheur* survives. It is the issue of December 27th, 1866, and is addressed to "Chas. Pacaud" in the handwriting of Mr. Laurier. It retains Eric Dorion's motto, "Work ennobles"; to the left the words, "Read! people of the fields," and to the right, "Read the great popular book." In the left-hand upper corner of the first page are the words "Wilfrid Laurier, *Rédacteur*." It will be remembered that Eric Dorion was a determined, even a violent opponent of Confederation, and much of his writing was vehement, passionate and tempestuous. In the issue of December 27th two

articles deal with the question of union. The spirit of the writing is that of *Le Défricheur* rather than that of Laurier. It is not in keeping with his valedictory at McGill nor with his earlier speeches in the Quebec Legislature. There is no doubt that he was in sympathy with the elder Dorion's campaign against Confederation, and probably believed that the main object of the English advocates of union, outside of Quebec, was to restrict the privileges and curtail the political power of the French population. That was undoubtedly the hope and expectation of George Brown, and John A. Macdonald's preference for a legislative rather than a federal union tended to support the conviction of the French Liberals. Moreover it would be difficult to abandon summarily the policy of Eric Dorion and impose upon *Le Défricheur's* constituency opinions and arguments hostile to all its life and teaching. A public journal, like an individual, develops character and personality, and only by gradual steps can it deny its past and repudiate its own utterances. At least it is true that if Mr. Laurier at twenty-five years of age opposed Confederation on the basis of the Quebec resolutions, he heartily accepted the union when it became an accomplished fact; and no one man in Quebec was more influential in reconciling the dissentient elements in the French Province to acceptance of the settlement and in infusing into his French compatriots the broader spirit of Canadian nationality. But, however that

may be, the writing in this vagrant copy of *Le Défricheur* has historical interest, and it is necessary to give the evidence as it exists. It is noticeable that in these articles the phrase "the English Colonies" is sometimes italicized, and that throughout there is a lively fear of the effects of Confederation upon the French population. The chief article reads:—

"*Le Journal des Trois Rivières* has put the following question to us:—

"'Will not the union of all the provinces of British North America place them in a better position to escape the dangers of the future than their present isolation?'

"*Le Journal des Trois Rivières* is one of the zealous advocates of Confederation. The manner in which it has put the question shows fully what it thinks, and gives us the secret of its sympathies: if it preaches Confederation, it is for the welfare of the English Colonies in British North America! The welfare of the English Colonies! That is its first thought!

"Let us first say this in justice to *Le Journal des Trois Rivières*, that its ideas are in perfect conformity with those of its masters.

"When the Ministers undertook their Confederation, they had in view only the English Colonies; the basis of all their calculations, of all their hopes, of all their projects, was always the English Colonies.

"Well, that is not the way we politicians of the Papineau school look at the matter; when any change whatsoever is proposed in our political or social institutions, we do not look to see whether this change will be of use to the English Colonies or to any other neighbour; we think only of Lower Canada and of the French race.

"What have we in common with the *English Colonies?* What interests, what relations bind us to them? Is it a matter of origin? religion, language, national aspirations? No! Not at all!

"We have nothing in common with the *English Colonies,* except that we are all dependent upon the same metropolis.

"That is the reason of the servility of *Le Journal des Trois Rivières* and of the ministry. For what other name can be given to the conduct of him who, in the constitutional changes which are imposed upon his nation, sees only the danger, more or less, or the benefit which is drawn therefrom by those with whom he shares the honour of the colonial yoke?

"*Le Journal des Trois Rivières* and the other advocates of Confederation have forgotten that they were French Canadians in order that they might not lose sight of the fact that they were English colonists.

"Therefore, before examining whether Confederation will place the English Colonies of British North America in a position to escape the dangers

of the future, we shall examine whether Confederation is of use to Lower Canada and to the French race.

"We do not care a fig for the English Colonies, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland. We have the same relations with them as with Australia; we are colonies of England, that is all. The only difference is the distance, greater or less, which separates us.

"*Le Journal des Trois Rivières* is an advocate of Confederation because it will place the English Colonies of America in a position to escape the dangers of the future; we are the opponents of it because it will be the tomb of the French race and the ruin of Lower Canada.

"Working in Lower Canada, that is to say in its natural sphere, the French race exercises its influence to the whole extent of its strength. When it will be mingled with a race five times larger, whose tendencies are diametrically opposite, either one of two things will happen: either it will follow, like a docile slave, the English and Protestant majority, and before long become English and Protestant as it is, or else it will struggle, a powerless minority, and in place of being swallowed up and drowned peacefully, slowly, with a full knowledge of the situation, it will be reduced to mercy by violence.

"The project of Confederation binds us hand and foot to the English Colonies. We can do

nothing, absolutely nothing. All important questions are within the sphere of the federal Government, that is to say, the Government of the English Colonies, and all the acts of our little local Parliament can be modified, corrected, cut, enlarged, annulled by the same Government. It has full power over our institutions, our laws, our acts.

"It is not even a Confederation; the federal form attributes to the central Government only the direction of affairs common to all the states; the affairs peculiar to each state are left to its own control, and no one—neither the central Government nor any one else—has the right to intervene. Here everything is quite the contrary; the central Government has the upper hand over everything—remember, over everything. That is a badly disguised legislative union which in a few years will not be even that.

"It would be idle now to discuss the question whether the union of the provinces would place them in a position to escape the dangers of the future, but as we do not wish to be behind in the matter of politeness towards our *confrère*, who has promised us a reply, we are going to approach his question.

"Before formulating this question our *confrère* triumphantly hurled at our head this cry: 'Union is strength,' in a tone which meant 'Answer that if you can.'

"We replied at once and we reply again: Union

is strength, yes, but only when the elements united are homogeneous. It will be in vain for you to throw together incongruous elements; there will be no strength, there will not even be union.

"The union of Ireland and England has been neither strong nor happy any more than the union of Hungary and of Italy to Austria. If there was any identity whatever between Ireland and England, between Hungary and Italy and Austria, they would have been formidable powers. Far from that, these unions have been weak and deplorable.

"Are the provinces of British North America homogeneous? Let *Le Journal des Trois Rivières* reply.

"What are these dangers which the union of the provinces would place us in a position to escape?

"These dangers can come only from the aggression of the United States. Would Confederation be a match for that powerful colossus? Could our five millions of confederated people cope with the thirty millions of men who make up the American union? That idea is chimerical. We said before in another article, and we repeat it: it is necessary to see things as they are, and to speak as we see; when you will have made Confederation you will be armed with an egg-shell to stop a bullet, you will have placed a wisp of straw in the way of a giant.

"Very far from placing the colonies in a position to escape the dangers of the future, Confederation will create new dangers.

"In this strange union every contrary element will meet face to face; the Catholic element and the Protestant element, the English element and the French element. From this moment there will be strife, division, war, anarchy; the weakest element, that is to say, the French and Catholic element, will be dragged along and swallowed up by the strongest.

"From whatever point of view it is regarded, the project of Confederation is false and full of dangers. There is not one man, not even M. McLeod, editor of *Le Journal des Trois Rivières*, who is not forced to admit that.

"M. McLeod asks us merely for a reply, but we will go farther; we will tell him frankly, bluntly, why he and the thorough-going Conservatives give their support to such a radically bad project: it is not because they believe that *the union of the provinces will put them in a position to escape the dangers of the future*, that is only a miserable pretext; the real reason is hatred of the Liberal party and of Liberal ideas.

"When in 1864 the Conservative party lost power, the Liberal party was going to take possession for a long time. The Conservative ministry suddenly turned around and allied itself with Mr. Brown and the *Clear Grits*, who demanded Confederation as the price of this alliance. The sacrifice of principles cost M. Cartier little; the former (Mr. Brown) placed in his hands a portfolio which was

ardently sought; he did not hesitate; a large number of his political followers left him from that time, but an equally large number—among them M. McLeod—accepted the new alliance of their master and the policy which followed. This alliance, this policy, they detested from the bottom of their heart, but it was the only means of throwing into opposition the Liberal party and Liberal ideas.

"You have succeeded, gentlemen; you have obtained a temporary triumph; but you have killed nationality!"

The second article is headed, "A new project of Confederation," and reads: "The following despatch was received from London last week: 'The delegates from the English provinces of North America have agreed upon the basis of a project of Confederation. The project will be submitted for the sanction of Parliament as soon as it is drawn up.' According to this despatch, we may expect to see nothing less than a new project for Confederation substituted for the old one. What can be the reason for this modification? The delegates from the provinces are the same men who drew up the project with which we are acquainted; the idea of changing it, therefore, cannot come from them. This alteration must then have been demanded by the Government of the Metropolis. Will the people at last understand that the Canadian ministry are the valets and slaves of the Colonial Office?"

There is a third article well worth quoting. Charles Pacaud, of Stanfold, had quarrelled with his clergyman, the Rev. Mr. Duhaut, and had refused to pay the tithe which all Catholics in Quebec are obliged to pay their curés. The tithe, or as it is called in French, *le livre*, is nominally one-tenth of all the grains harvested. In practice, however, this amount is never levied. The tax is really one twenty-sixth. Pacaud refused to pay this tithe for various reasons. He contended that the clergyman in question was not a curé or rector but only a missionary, and that only a curé or rector permanently appointed was entitled to the tithe. He claimed that the property on which it was sought to collect was only recently cultivated, and did not yield sufficient return to pay the labourers employed thereon. There were also various other allegations, and finally the contention that the clergyman did not acknowledge the supremacy of the Queen. The chief objections urged, however, were the title of Rev. Mr. Duhaut to the position and to the tithe. At the Court of Review in Quebec, Judge Stewart maintained the plea of Pacaud that the clergyman was not entitled to the tithe inasmuch as he was a missionary and not a permanent curé. But Chief Justice Meredith and Judge Taschereau held, as *Le Défricheur* says, "that the curé was entitled to the tithe from the simple reason that he occupied the parsonage." The amount involved was not more than twenty dollars. It was the principle which was

at stake. Pacaud was condemned by the Court to pay the tithe for the past, and the only way in which he could escape the obligation for the future was formally to renounce the Catholic religion. This he did; and until his death in 1895 he was a Protestant, and his family are still Protestants. The case excited extraordinary interest in Quebec. Pacaud was a wealthy merchant and money-lender at Stanfold. His wife was a sister of Judge Mondelet, who gave the first judgment for Madame Guibord and the *Institut Canadien* against the cure and fabrique of Notre Dame at Montreal, and one of the most independent and fearless judges that have ever sat on the bench in Quebec. Under the heading, "Insulter," the surviving copy of *Le Défricheur* thus deals with the judgment pronounced against Mr. Pacaud, and with the comments of a contemporary journal:—

"*Le Journal des Trois Rivières* reports a case of Duhaut against Pacaud in which the Court of Revision at Quebec decided that 'the tithe is due to the curé from the simple fact that he is in possession of his parsonage.'

"We do not know the facts of the case, but from the little knowledge we have of the matter, and independently of the high authority of Judges Meredith, Stewart and Taschereau, we believe their decision perfectly conforms to the principles of the old French jurisprudence.

"That, however, is no reason for insulting Mr.

Pacaud, the condemned party, as does *Le Journal des Trois Rivières.*

"If Mr. Pacaud maintained the contrary of the thesis sanctioned by the judgment, he certainly had a plausible cause, and there was nothing in it but a pure question of law. Every party who prosecutes before a court a litigious claim, whether well founded or not, provided that it be plausible, exercises a legitimate right, and to make it a reproach to him that the court did not see as he did is foolishness, if not bad faith.

"But it is not enough for *Le Journal des Trois Rivières* to insult the living; it attacks the dead; it rummages the tomb. After its tirade against Mr. Pacaud it exclaims: "Ah! if the late *Défricheur* still lived you would hear it cry, 'Pay! Baptiste, Pay!'

"Notice all the scarcely veiled hatred against Mr. Dorion which pierces through this paraphrase! Do you not see glee, barely hidden, that the 'late *Défricheur*' has ceased to exist? Let *Le Journal des Trois Rivières* understand well if the 'late *Défricheur*' still lived it would not say 'Pay! Baptiste, Pay!'

"Mr. Dorion attacked vicious institutions, waste, squandering; he denounced these things to the people, but he never discussed the application of the existing law.

"This malevolent insinuation hurled at Mr. Dorion when he was alive, would have been only

one more calumny added to those of which he was the victim; to-day it is simply cowardice.

"There were insulters of tombs before *Le Journal des Trois Rivières*, but they displayed their hatred openly. To follow to the tomb the memory of a man by malevolent insinuations and half formulated accusations is a depth of meanness hitherto unknown."[1]

Outside of Quebec or Montreal, Mr. Laurier could not have selected a better centre for the practice of his profession than Arthabaskaville; while it was fortunate for the man and fortunate for Canada that he was to pass so many years of his life among a mixed French and English population. He was in daily contact with one of the crucial problems of government in Canada, and the conditions were altogether favourable to a sane and tolerant study of the sympathies, the prejudices, and all the social and political ideals of both French and English. Twenty-five or thirty years ago Arthabaskaville was a straggling village of a few score houses, a few primitive industries, a parish church, and a Catholic college, set in a valley and surrounded by a wide sweep of farming country. And Arthabaskaville has slept on down the years, and is to-day very much what it was a generation ago. The Judicial District of Arthabaska covers the counties of Drummond, Arthabaska and Megantic.

[1] The copy of *Le Défricheur* from which these quotations are taken was obtained from Mr. Charles A. Gauvreau, M.P. for Temiscouata.

The seat of the Superior Court is at Arthabaskaville, and there are circuit courts at Drummondville, in the County of Drummond, and at Inverness, in the County of Megantic. The population of Drummond comprises French, English, Irish, Scotch, and American elements, while that of Megantic is chiefly French and Scotch, and especially Scotch in the townships of Leeds and Inverness. Mr. Laurier soon acquired an exceptional popularity in this community, and rose steadily to a position of leadership in its public concerns. His French neighbours took a vast pride in his gifts and attainments, and he soon won an abiding place in the esteem and confidence of the English-speaking people, and particularly of the Scotch element. The severe candour, the shrewd, keen wit, the simple direct logic of the Scotch mind, have always fascinated Mr. Laurier. He said once that if he were not French he would choose to be—Scotch.[1] A pregnant pause just before he pronounced the last word gave a peculiar relish to the jest and a flavour of Scotch shrewdness to the observation. He was speaking at Toronto, and the natural thought of his audience was that he was feeling for the native sympathies and proper racial self-esteem of the English-speaking people of Ontario. But he gave a deft turn to the sentence, and one saw behind the speaker that great host of Scotsmen

[1] Speech at the Banquet of the Toronto Board of Trade, January 5th, 1893.

in Canada who constitute such a powerful element in the voting strength of the Liberal party. Nothing was further from his thought than to use a social occasion for a party purpose, or to estimate cheaply the good qualities of English or Irish. He knew that the ingratiating word would be understood, but his audience could not know so well that behind the chaffing humour of the moment was a downright sincerity. Mr. Laurier's liking for the Scotch is the growth of years and the fact of a lifetime. It is the product of his home life with the Murrays of New Glasgow and his long social and business intercourse with the Scotch settlements of Drummond and Megantic.

For some years Mr. Laurier practiced his profession with zeal and distinction. He was fond of the work of circuit, and was successful in the conduct of many important cases. He was tenacious in argument, aggressive in defence, and fair and moderate in prosecution. He advised with caution, he had no greed for fees, and was never a maker of litigation. Naturally, office work to a man of his genius and temperament was drudgery, and he probably turned sometimes with pathetic weariness from the petty details of business. It is not true that Mr. Laurier ever lacked industry, but he sometimes lacked interest in questions that were not of pith, size and consequence. His heart was in the thrust and parry, the heat and vigour of debate in open court; and no one who has cared to learn

of his life and work in the court-rooms and on the hustings of Quebec will understand just how he acquired his early reputation in the other provinces for excessive amiability and lack of aggressive qualities. Courtesy is not weakness. A man is not necessarily strong and aggressive simply because he is ill-mannered. Mr. Laurier could always set himself to a great task with high courage and unflagging enthusiasm, and has probably always had to flog himself into adequate interest in the smaller concerns from which no poor man in this practical world can escape. During these years he was poor in purse and frail in health, and with all his splendid dowry of intellect and personality he had to know both labour and sacrifice before he got free of debt and thoroughly established in his profession.

Two years after Mr. Laurier settled at Arthabaskaville, on May 13th, 1868, he married Miss Zoë Lafontaine, of Montreal, and, if we except the good gift of children, all of blessedness that marriage yields has been realized from this union. Madame Laurier is as admirable and efficient as the wife of the Prime Minister as she was as the helpmeet of the struggling barrister of Arthabaskaville. With something of her great husband's philosophic disposition, with good sense, good taste, and excellent social tact, she has been equal to the onerous social duties and responsibilities which have increased with every onward step in his successful and influential career. We dwell with unction upon

the labours and sacrifices which fall upon men who devote their lives to the public service, but seem to have little thought for the burdens which fall upon the wives of politicians. It is the fact, however, that the wife of a party leader bears a load only less heavy than that her husband must carry, and can know few of the consolations of the statesman who finds his recompense in useful and honourable public service. Official life means for women an intolerable social strain, and often an intolerable domestic isolation, and it is not surprising that the influence of so many women is exerted to turn their husbands from public pursuits.

Mr. Laurier's marriage set fresh spurs to his ambition, and insured that solicitous care for his health which was essential to his restoration to full physical vigour. His popularity and his fame were steadily increasing. He was trusted alike by French and English, and politically was no doubt stronger with the English-speaking electors than with his French compatriots. Cartier was at the zenith of his power in Quebec. There was a sullen and enduring quarrel between the Reform party and the Catholic Church. The influence of the clergy with the French population was formidable. Mr. Laurier was neither a courtier nor a sycophant, and could enter Parliament only as an outspoken and independent Liberal, bound by no pledge other than that of reasonable loyalty to the Reform party, and recognizing no duty in public life except

to serve the State and promote the common welfare. At any rate, all surrounding influences, and probably his own inclination, were driving him on towards public life, and the question of his entrance into the Legislature now rested upon his own decision and upon the call for an election.

CHAPTER VI

IN TWO PARLIAMENTS

MR. LAURIER had not long to wait for the opportunity to enter Parliament. The first Legislature of Quebec after Confederation was dissolved on May 27th, 1871, and in June and July of that year a new house was elected. Mr. Laurier was the Liberal candidate for the electoral division of Arthabaska, and was opposed by Mr. Edward John Hemming, who had held the seat during the first Parliament. Mr. Hemming was a barrister and practiced at Drummondville. He was English and of some talent, but was not remarkable for sound political judgment. *Le Nouveau Monde*, of Montreal, a clerical organ, founded to combat Liberal tendencies and to promote the Catholic programme, took notice of the contest in Arthabaska, and said in one of its issues: "Mr. Hemming has rendered great services to the county by his devotion to the Sorel and Drummondville road. Unfortunately he has not always shown himself just and impartial to the French Canadians and Catholics. Mr. Laurier is personally esteemed, but his advanced Liberal theories will prevent Catholics from giving him the cordial support which a Conservative would have received. It is regrettable that a more acceptable

candidate is not in the field." The general result of the election was to maintain the Conservative administration in office, but Mr. Laurier carried Arthabaska by a majority of 1,000. His was one of the notable achievements of the contest, and it is not surprising that when he went down to the meeting of Parliament at Quebec, he was heartily welcomed by his Liberal colleagues, and excited the very special interest of his political opponents. His signal electoral triumph had carried his name all over the province, and the fact that a new and striking figure had appeared in public life was widely recognized.

But he had still to meet that crucial test which checks the progress and breaks the heart of many a politician. Mr. Laurier had proved that he could impress a judge, move a jury, or sway a public meeting. These, however, were not conclusive evidences that he had the manner and the method of the successful parliamentary debater. The most effective platform speakers are often unsuccessful in Parliament. The best parliamentary debaters often fail on the platform. Life hardly holds a more poignant humiliation than that which comes to the orator with a great popular reputation, when he finds that he is impotent and ineffective on the floor of Parliament, and recognizes that he cannot adapt himself to the new conditions. No man of his generation in Canada excelled Mr. Chapleau in the arts and graces of popular oratory. His mag-

netic presence, fiery eloquence, flashing eye, and sweeping gesture, had a tremendous power over Quebec audiences, and he was hardly less effective when he appeared at great public meetings in the English provinces. But as a rule he could not move the House of Commons. For that audience the performance was too shrill and strenuous, and he suffered in comparison with inferior men who had no platform reputation to maintain. Mr. Laurier was but thirty years of age when he took his seat in the Quebec Legislature, and, of course, had then no platform reputation such as Mr. Chapleau enjoyed when he entered the House of Commons. But he had achieved distinct success as a public speaker, and he must now repeat that success in Parliament if he was to hold the ground he had won, and justify his electoral triumph.

The Legislature met on November 7th, and three days later Mr. Laurier rose to speak on the Address. It will be remembered that the system of dual representation still prevailed, and that many of the men who were conspicuous figures in the old parliaments of united Canada and some who had high rank in the new Federal Legislature had seats in the Assembly. Among these were George E. Cartier, Luther H. Holton, George Irvine, Joseph E. Cauchon, Theodore Robitaille, H. G. Joly, Telesphore Fournier, Joseph G. Blanchet, and Hector L. Langevin. Such a House could have no mean debating standard, and only a speech

with body, spirit, and finish, could make an impression in such surroundings. Contemporary writers agree that Mr. Laurier scored an unequivocal success. No doubt the bearing and manner of the young orator were material factors in this initial parliamentary triumph. No speech that Mr. Laurier has ever made reads quite as well as it was spoken. The rich, musical voice, the erect form and classic face, the simplicity and candour which are the outstanding characteristics of the man, cannot be transferred to paper, and without these the speeches of Wilfrid Laurier are mere shadows of the actual performance. This speech, as it has come down to us, has some of the noteworthy characteristics, but, of course, does not take rank with the best of his later deliverances. It has, however, no hint of the petty quarrels of the hustings. It has none of the flavour of the scrap-book. There was no threshing of dead straw in order to prove the fibre of the speaker's partisanship, and establish his devotion to inherited party feuds. It is, in fact, not an echo, but an original utterance, and unquestionably reveals independent thinking and maturity of judgment.

It is true he does strike one sadly familiar note. The Speech from the Throne, in dutiful fulfillment of the ordained function of such speeches, declared that the Province was exceptionally prosperous, and in reply Mr. Laurier remarked that Tantalus was rich, but in sight of abundance was eternally

starving. Optimism goes with the offices in Canada, and pessimism with divorce from place and patronage. But there was sound reason for Mr. Laurier's lament over the slow settlement of the vacant lands, and the laggard development of the natural resources of the country. There was sagacity and penetration also in his recognition of the industrial qualities of the people of Lower Canada, and he was probably not far wrong in his contention that they could manufacture twenty-five per cent. more cheaply in Quebec than in any other part of the American continent. His idea of an industrial immigration was probably derived from the old *Rouge* programme. He argued that it was possible to check the exodus to the United States by introducing into Quebec the master mechanics and small capitalists of the cities of Europe, the master miners of Wales and the north of England, the mechanics of Alsace, the Flemish weavers, and the German artisans. There is one sentence in the speech which has often been quoted as evidence that he had an early leaning towards the theory of protection. "It is," he said, "a humiliating confession to make, that after three centuries of existence this country is still unable to supply its own wants, and that it is still obliged to have recourse to foreign markets, though nature has lavished upon it all the gifts necessary to make it a manufacturing country." He said again, "It is a duty, especially for us Canadians of French origin, to

create a national industry. We are surrounded by a strong and vigorous race, who are endowed with a devouring activity and have taken possession of the entire universe as their field of labour." He confessed that he was pained to see his own people eternally excelled by their fellow-countrymen of British origin, and he insisted that this was due to purely political reasons. He pointed out that after the cession the French Canadians, in order to maintain their national inheritance intact, fell back upon themselves and held no relations with the outside world, and that the result was "to keep them strangers to the reforms which were constantly taking place beyond their boundaries, and to fatally shut them up within the narrow circle of their old theories." On the other hand, much of the new blood that was poured into the colony came from the great British centres of trade and industry, and this progressive element was ceaselessly renewed by a constant current of immigration equipped with fresh information and furnished with new ideas. "We need, therefore," he said, "have no shame in admitting that we were beaten by such men and under such circumstances." Then he spoke the message which has always been upon his lips, which breathes the spirit that has animated all his public life, and reveals the catholicity of his patriotism, and the depth of his devotion to the ideal of a united Canada. The times had changed, he proceeded, and the hour had struck for French

Canadians to enter the lists with their English-speaking fellows. "Our respective forefathers were enemies, and waged bloody war against each other for centuries. But we, their descendants, united under the same flag, fight no other fights but those of a generous emulation to excel each other in trade and industry, in the sciences and the arts of peace." This was a good rock on which to rest a career, and to this ideal he has been true in all his later teaching.

That he then inclined to protectionism cannot be doubted. Others of his earlier speeches contain very direct declarations in favour of temporary protection for the undeveloped industries of a new country. For the moment, however, his aim was not so much to declare a preference for any particular economic policy, as to awaken in the French Canadian people an appreciation of their own admirable industrial qualities, and to lure Quebec into a more active participation in the industrial and commercial life of the country. This appears still more clearly in the closing sentences of his address. It seems that when Mr. Pierre Chauveau took the office of Premier in 1867, he had been for twelve years Superintendent of Education in Quebec, and had just returned from Europe, where he had gone to study the various educational systems of the old world. Mr. Laurier found fault because he had not embodied in legislation the results of his observations and experience, and emphasized the grave

necessity for a reform of the existing system of education. Here he was upon delicate ground, but he knew the word which needed to be said, and his utterance is distinct, straightforward, and unequivocal. "In a free state," he said, "everything is connected and linked together, legislation, trade, industry, arts, sciences and letters. All are members of the same body, the body social. When one of the members suffers, the entire body is affected; when there is an abuse anywhere, the entire body social is more or less paralyzed; when there is anywhere something left undone which should be done, the normal order is thereby disturbed." He buttressed this position by a sympathetic eulogy of the reforming zeal of British statesmen, and counselled Ministers to show equal determination in overthrowing abuses, and the same high fidelity to the cause of the people.

It may be that this was not a great speech, but it will probably bear comparison with any speech that has been made by a man of his years in a Canadian Parliament. It exhibits at least three features that are conspicuous in many of his later addresses: (1) The appeal to British ideals in statesmanship, and the assertion of the unequalled freedom and efficiency of British institutions; (2) the apt classical allusion, the flavour of literature, the glimpse of the wisdom of the books and the authority of the past; (3) the eager plea for unity and coöperation among all elements of the Canadian

people, and the solemn prayer for a final truce to ancient quarrels and inherited prejudices.

As has been said, the speech was well received. It was received with enthusiasm by his party associates, and with respect by his political opponents. In this particular the French Canadians are more generous than we more phlegmatic and self-contained English people. It is a common observation at Ottawa that the social relations of the French members are substantially unaffected by political differences; and surely if our party contests are fairly waged and there is integrity in our public life, that is the saner and the better fashion. It was recognized from this moment that Mr. Laurier must become a force in the public life of the country, and that in his own province he had no serious rival among the younger men in the Liberal party. Holton and Dorion were still in harness, but death was soon to strike the one, and the other was shortly to pass to the Bench for which he had such natural and such eminent qualifications. Keen-eyed students of men and affairs saw in Mr. Laurier one who seemed to combine the fine and strong qualities of both these veterans, and marvelled at his surefootedness and remarkable equipment for public service. He was, however, not an exceptionally active member of the Legislature, and only two or three of his important speeches have been preserved. In fact, he has never been a frequent speaker, even in the House of Commons. Until his

assumption of the Liberal leadership, he was rarely heard, except when great questions were in issue, or local interests demanded his attention. His heart was in the fine old library, rather than in the heated party quarrels which too often disturbed the serenity of the Legislative Chamber, and, except when he felt the real pressure of public duty, he was careless whether or not his name figured in Hansard.

Just two weeks after he had spoken on the Address, the question of dual representation arose in the Legislature, and he made a speech which reveals a close study of the Canadian Constitution, and a thorough grasp of the essential features of the federal system. He argued that dual representation was not compatible with the federal principle, and must be fatal to the freedom and independence of the Legislatures. The sphere of the Legislature was the protection and conservation of local interests, and that of the federal Parliament the conservation and protection of general interests. The representative who was allowed to sit in both Houses must have divided duties and conflicting interests, and the inevitable tendency must be for the local body to sink into a position of subordination to the central Parliament. This was sound reasoning, and the position is amply supported by subsequent developments in our political history. A few years later the argument prevailed both in Quebec and in Ontario, and it is long since any one has thought that our Constitution would be a workable political

instrument if federal ministers or members could sit in the local parliaments, or local members proceed from the consideration of provincial interests in the Legislatures to the consideration of questions which know no provincial boundaries, and which could not be profitably involved in the exigencies of local politics. We owe to the free action of the local parliaments the final interpretation of the Constitution in the spirit of its founders, and the ultimate triumph of the federal principle, for which the Liberal leaders contended at Confederation. This speech, much more clearly than the speech on the Address, revealed the young member for Arthabaska as an earnest student of constitutional questions, a keen and sagacious observer of political tendencies and conditions, and an accomplished master of the art of debate.[1]

Le Pays discussed the speech with positive enthusiasm. The Montreal *Herald*, the chief Liberal paper of Quebec, said: "Mr. Laurier, the young and talented member for Arthabaska, made the speech of the evening. It was remarkable for lucidity and power of argument. Many gentlemen accustomed to parliamentary debates, pronounced it the ablest address given this session. His French is remarkably pure, and gives evidence of the highest culture and education." *Le Nouveau Monde* again took occasion

[1] Mr. Laurier's speech on the Address in the Quebec Legislature, and also that on Dual Representation will be found in the collection of his speeches, published at Quebec in 1890, and edited by Mr. Ulric Barthe.

to combat his Liberal opinions, but freely recognized the strength, grace, and finish of the speech, and the distinct impression made upon the House. Two orators, said *Le Nouveau Monde*, shared the attention of the Chamber,—Irvine and Laurier. It added: "Mr. Laurier speaks with an elegance and purity of style unknown in the Legislative Assembly. Mr. Chauveau alone can dispute the palm with him in this respect. His voice, sonorous and supple, knows every variety of inflexion. In debate he is calm, and goes back to first principles. Unfortunately, his studies have lain along Liberal, not to say Socialist, lines. In his speech he brought out the theory of Rousseau on the social contract. To hear him, society is nothing else than the result of a contract by which each of its members divests himself of his rights. Now this theory is false from every point of view, and cannot be admitted in Christian society. It is from that theory that every revolution has sprung. Rousseau wished that members of society could never resume the rights they gave up. But his disciples replied, rightly enough, that one generation could engage only itself, and that the contract could be kept only so long as the majority consented. From the point of view of the social contract, this argument is irresistible. When armed with this principle, men sapped the bases of society, or overthrew every government in succession, until at last it could be said that Europe, and particularly France, became ungovernable. On

studying the Christian theory closer, and comparing it with that he appears to embrace, Mr. Laurier will see that the first is infinitely superior to the second in every respect. But we have wandered far from the double mandate." *Le Nouveau Monde*, in truth, would wander far from any mandate in order to attack the Liberal party of Quebec, and the principles of government which Mr. Laurier represented. It is interesting to remember that the resolution against dual representation, for which Mr. Laurier spoke so long ago, was introduced by Mr. F. G. Marchand, who represented the fine old Liberal county of St. Johns in the Quebec Legislature for an unbroken term of more than thirty years, and has left a memory of private virtue, and a record of public service as pure and as blameless as any that Canadians are permitted to cherish.

But it was not in the Quebec Legislature that Mr. Laurier was to find his sphere of service. The Liberal leaders were not slow to perceive that his natural field was in federal affairs, and he was easily persuaded to seek election to the federal Parliament. He therefore resigned his seat in the Legislature, and at the general election of 1874, as stormy a time as our politics have known, he stood for the Commons for Drummond and Arthabaska, and was returned with 238 of a majority. He took his seat in the first Liberal Parliament returned after Confederation, and the only Liberal Parliament which Canada knew until he himself led the

Liberal party to victory nearly a quarter of a century afterwards. His desk mate was Dr. Louis Fréchette, and though that brilliant scholar and writer soon wearied of the stress and strain of party warfare and returned to his books, there was then formed between the two a friendship as close as it has proved to be enduring. Dr. Fréchette thus describes Mr. Laurier's introduction to the House of Commons: "As the resounding triumph of his début in the Legislative Assembly of Quebec had placed him in the highest rank among the most brilliant French orators of his own province, so that which marked his entry into the House of Commons, in 1874, carried him at one bound to the distinction of being almost without a peer among the English-speaking debaters of the Dominion."[1] There is, perhaps, a touch of extravagance in this burning eulogy, but it is quite true that he spoke with extraordinary acceptance, and from the outset was greatly liked and profoundly respected by the House of Commons.

His first speech was made in French as seconder of the address in reply to the speech with which Lord Dufferin opened Parliament on March 30th, 1874. It was not until the next session that Hansard was established, and the press reports of Mr. Laurier's speech are imperfect and inadequate. The mover of the address on that occasion was Mr. Thomas Moss, who represented West Toronto for

[1] Taché's "Men of the Day," second series, page 21.

three sessions and then resigned his seat in order to accept a judgeship. Mr. Moss was a man of brilliant attainments, whose untimely death was a grievous loss to the Canadian judiciary. The pride which the Liberals of Ontario took in Mr. Moss was probably quite equal to that which the Liberals of Quebec had in Mr. Laurier. It is seldom indeed that two such interesting figures have been found among the new members of a Canadian Parliament, and rarely, if ever, has the task to which they were assigned been so well performed. Three years later the one was a Minister of the Crown, and the other Chief Justice of the Court of Appeal for Ontario.

Mr. Laurier said that under our Constitution we had freedom, privilege, and the power of a great nation, combined with the advantages of connection with the British Empire. He did not believe the Constitution could be replaced by another as good. Some of them had been opposed to Confederation years ago because they doubted if the scheme of union was practicable. But the moment they were defeated in 1867 they set to work to make Confederation a success. The French Canadian Liberal party were not like the Liberals of France or other nations of the continent of Europe, who were at any time ready, by violence, to overturn existing Governments. They resembled rather the Liberals of England, who for so many years worked and voted for reform, and by constitutional

means achieved the grand results which they saw to-day. From the moment the opponents of Confederation in Canada were defeated they bowed to the decision, and frankly and earnestly endeavoured to advance the interests of the new Dominion. Their programme was based upon the principle of respect for authority and full acceptance of the obligation to labour for the general good of the country. Our Constitution was founded upon the British Constitution, and that was the finest under which men ever lived. It secured to every man his liberty, and enabled him to exercise his constitutional rights without fear and under the protection of authority. There was nothing on this continent to equal that great Constitution. It was particularly fitted to unite citizens of different races, nationalities, and religions, and in these respects even the Constitution of the United States had been less successful. There was not a man in Canada who did not support the union, and the process of welding into one the different provinces had been so successful that they were all proud to be Canadians, while equally proud to be subjects of the British Empire. If to-day there was a man among them who would seek or desire to sever the union, he deserved no place in the community, and was unworthy of the privileges and advantages of British citizenship. He affirmed, he said, without fear of contradiction, that we presented a spectacle of civil and religious liberty not surpassed in the

world, and we had none of those questions to trouble us which excited the passions of people, and disorganized society in European nations.[1]

According to the Toronto *Mail's* report, Mr. Laurier declared that he "gloried with Mr. Moss in the connection of this Dominion with the Empire. The Liberals of Quebec were not of the same school as the Radicals of France, but of the Liberal school of England, who desired to accomplish reforms in a constitutional manner. They did not wish to effect a change which had not the sanction of the majority. It was in such a way that the British Constitution had been framed and handed down to us in all its perfection after the wisdom of centuries had been employed in the great work." *The Mail* adds that he concluded "with a brilliant peroration." This was spoken twenty-seven years ago, but it is in spirit and in letter exactly what Mr. Laurier has said all down the years, and it would be hard indeed to overestimate the services which this eloquent French Canadian has thus rendered to the cause of Canadian unity, and to the integrity and solidarity of British institutions on this continent.

Mr. Laurier also discussed the questions raised in the Speech from the Throne, and we shall find in his other observations some declarations of policy to which he has tenaciously adhered, and glimpses of that courageous programme of development

[1] Reports of the Toronto *Globe* and Montreal *Herald*.

which is the characteristic feature of his Administration. He rejoiced that it was proposed to improve our commercial facilities, and to increase our industrial resources, and that among the measures promised, those relating to commercial development were so prominent and so important. He argued that the desire of the Liberal Government to have a railway constructed to the Pacific was quite as strong as that of their predecessors, but that commercial rather than political reasons should determine the route, and measure the scale of expenditure. He was glad, too, that the Government had promised the enlargement of our harbours and canals, and these he described as the real source of the greatness to which Canada was destined. This question, he said, had been before the country for years, but the work had never been vigorously prosecuted, and he contended that in determining our policy we should look not simply to the next few years but to "the great future." He passed on to the question of reciprocity, and spoke strongly for better trade relations with the United States. He hoped that the Commissioners then at Washington would succeed in negotiating a treaty, and argued that Canadians generally favoured reciprocal trade relations with the Republic. This no one then disputed. At that time the leaders of both the great political parties in Canada would have heartily accepted the widest measure of reciprocity with the United States, so long as discrimination against

Great Britain was not involved; nor would anyone have discovered that treason was practised or the British Empire endangered by the consummation of such a natural and beneficial arrangement. Political exigencies did not yet require new tests of loyalty and new statutes of treason. He spoke also for amendment of the election laws, for simultaneous polling, and for the creation of a Supreme Court for the determination of legal and constitutional questions which had still to be submitted for consideration to the law officers of the Crown in England.[1]

The speech was undoubtedly successful, or at least as successful as a French speech can be in the House of Commons. But no man who speaks only in French can make a reputation in the Canadian Parliament, largely influence the deliberations of that assembly, or appreciably determine the course of events in the country. If Mr. Laurier's speech on this occasion had been made in English, it would have excited general attention throughout the English-speaking provinces, and have set him at once in the front rank of the debaters of the Commons. At it was, the speech was almost unnoticed outside of Quebec, and his eloquent interpretation of the attitude of French Canadian Liberals towards the Confederation and the Empire was imperfectly heard and imperfectly understood.

The Globe's parliamentary correspondent had

[1] Reports of the Toronto *Globe* and Montreal *Herald*.

this reference to the speech: "Mr. Laurier, the seconder, spoke in French, a circumstance that deprived many members of the pleasure of fully understanding a speech that those who could enjoy it declared to be of the highest order. Mr. Laurier's appearance is youthful, but he is already well known as an eloquent public speaker, and he addressed the House with the quiet but earnest manner of a practised debater. He, like the mover of the Address, was warmly cheered by both Ministerialists and Opposition members when he sat down." On the following day *The Globe* made editorial reference to the speech as follows: "Mr. Laurier, who spoke in French, must, judging from the translation which appeared in our columns, have worthily followed Mr. Moss, nor was it any wonder that the compliments of the Prime Minister and of Sir John Macdonald should have been struck in another than the formal key adopted on such occasions." A writer in *La Minerve*, the French Conservative organ of Montreal, describing the new Parliament, and more particularly the younger French members from Quebec, said: "Since the name of Mr. Laurier has fallen under my pen, I must say, at the risk of causing him to shudder, that his speech, so eloquent, so conservative, has not placed him in the odour of sanctity with his leaders. His profession of political faith, his confidence in our new institutions, must sound strange in the ears of Dorion, who proclaimed in the House that Confederation was a

failure. If I did not know the independence of character of Mr. Laurier, I would recommend him to the good cares of Geoffrion and Paquet." The Montreal *Gazette*, also Conservative, in its parliamentary notes remarked: "Mr. Laurier gave his friends, the *Rouges*, a rather hard hit by declaring that he was of the Liberal party which was based on the model of the constitutional Liberals of England and not those of France."

Sir John Macdonald, as Leader of the Conservative Opposition, spoke immediately after Mr. Laurier, and warmly complimented the mover and seconder of the Address on the speeches they had just delivered. Mr. Laurier, he said, had "fully justified the reputation which he had brought with him." He added that "he did not wish to confine his approbation to the manner of the honourable gentlemen, but must compliment them mostly on their matter. He agreed with the seconder when he said that socially and politically the Liberals of Canada were not like those of France but those of England, who had raised the people without a revolution to their present high position." This reference of Sir John Macdonald to the likeness of the Liberals of Canada to those of Great Britain was heartily cheered, as was Mr. Laurier's eloquent assertion of the devotion of Canadian Liberals to the methods and ideals of the great leaders of British Liberalism. It but remains to add the tribute of the Prime Minister to Mr. Moss and Mr.

Laurier. Mr. Mackenzie heartily congratulated both members, and declared that during the time he had sat in Parliament and listened to similar speeches he did not recollect an occasion when he had heard the gentlemen acquit themselves so well as they had upon this occasion. Although both gentlemen sat as a matter of course upon the ministerial side of the House—at least so far as the ministerial benches could hold them—everyone, he was sure, would be pleased to welcome such an addition to the debating power of the House. This in brief is the story of Mr. Laurier's first appearance in the Parliament of Canada, and these the favourable circumstances under which he first stood out in full view of the Canadian people.

CHAPTER VII

THE RED RIVER TROUBLES

THE Confederation was yet in its infancy when the negotiations with the Imperial Government and the Hudson's Bay Company for the acquisition of the Western Territories were completed. For many years some of the bolder political and commercial spirits of older Canada had agitated for the abrogation of the great Company's sovereignty over the West, and for the assertion of Canadian authority from the Lake of the Woods to the Pacific. Speaking in the House of Commons in 1875, Sir John Macdonald, according to the rather imperfect Hansard of that period, said: "From the first time he had entered Parliament, the people of Canada looked forward to a western extension of territory, and from the time he was first a Minister in 1854, the question was brought up time and again and pressed with great ability and force by the Hon. George Brown, who was then a prominent man in opposition to the Government."[1] The impulse towards the westward march of empire came mainly from Upper Canada. Quebec, outside the commercial interests of Montreal, was hostile or indifferent, and the Eastern Provinces shrank from the

[1] Hansard, 1875, page 67.

great obligations involved in the assumption of sovereignty over the Western Territories. During the negotiations for Confederation, the advocates of territorial extension to the westward found it necessary to practise reticence and discretion. As soon, however, as the union was accomplished, the Hon. William Macdougall, who had been trained under the hand of George Brown, pressed the question upon the Cabinet and upon Parliament, and on December 4th, 1867, introduced resolutions declaring that it would promote the prosperity of the Canadian people and conduce to the advantage of the Empire if the Dominion of Canada were extended westward to the shores of the Pacific Ocean, and authorizing the Government to negotiate with the Imperial authorities for the union of Rupert's Land and the North-West Territory with the Dominion, and for recognition of the authority of the Canadian Parliament to legislate for their future welfare and good government. In 1868, in virtue of these resolutions, Cartier and Macdougall proceeded to London to arrange with the Home Government the terms of settlement with the Hudson's Bay Company, and the basis of transfer to Canada.

While the negotiations were in progress, the Company lodged a complaint against the Canadian Government for undertaking the construction of a road between the Lake of the Woods and the Red River Settlement, without its consent and in con-

tempt of its authority. There were proposals and counter-proposals, cautious bargaining on the part of the Canadian delegates, and determined reluctance on the part of the Company to surrender its sovereignty. But the Imperial authorities steadily inclined towards the side of Canada, and at length terms of settlement proposed by Lord Granville were accepted by the Company and favourably considered by the Canadian Government.

Under this agreement the Company received a money payment of £300,000 from Canada; the right to select a block of land adjoining each of its stations, amounting in the aggregate to 50,000 acres; one-twentieth of the land set out for settlement within the fertile belt for fifty years after the surrender; liberty to carry on its trade without hindrance in its corporate capacity, and freedom from exceptional taxes on its land, trade, or servants. In 1869 the Canadian Parliament ratified this agreement, and passed an act providing for a system of territorial government in Manitoba. On September 28th, Mr. Macdougall received the appointment of Lieutenant-Governor, and at once left the capital for Fort Garry. In advance of his assumption of office, and at least six months before the formal proclamation of annexation could issue, surveying parties were sent up to block out the new territory, and prepare for its settlement and administration under authority of the Canadian Parliament. Mr. Macdougall reached the Manitoba

frontier late in October, and it was understood that on December 1st the transfer to Canada would be made, and he would enter upon the government of the country. But he found a territory in revolt, an armed resistance to his advance, and a provisional government established in the name of the rebellious settlers, and under the practical dictatorship of a vain, rash, and passionate adventurer, about whose figure centres more of sorrow, of tragedy, and of conflict, than around any other in the annals of confederated Canada.

It is now admitted that the Canadian authorities did not proceed wisely in the negotiations for the entrance of Manitoba into the Confederation. There were prosperous and contented settlers in the Red River country. No one had the right to think that they could be treated as chattels, and summarily handed over to Canada by the Hudson's Bay Company. It was natural, when Canadian officials were sent out to take over the government of the territory, and new surveys were undertaken without adequate consultation with these people, that they should become apprehensive and restless and a ready prey to adventurers and demagogues. All the conditions were ripe for revolt, and the temper of the settlers was altogether unfavourable to serious consideration of the possible consequences of rash proceedings. A Council of Defence was organized under the leadership of John Bruce, Louis Riel, and Ambrose Lepine; the stores of the Hudson's

Bay Company were plundered, arms, ammunition, and provisions secured, and a force of five or six hundred half-breeds collected. Riel was the active leader of the movement, and however his fitness for the office may be regarded, he at least acquired an absolute authority over the insurgents. The situation was aggravated by the unsatisfactory relations which seem to have existed between Mr. Macdougall and Mr. Joseph Howe, who, as Secretary of State, had gone out to the new territory to arrange with the Hudson's Bay officials for its transfer to the Dominion, and to make such explanations of the intentions of Canada as would overcome the growing uneasiness among the settlers. The charge was freely made and widely believed that Howe fed the disaffection among the half-breeds, and quietly and secretly encouraged the organization of the movement to resist Mr. Macdougall's entrance into the territory. His own letters to Sir John Macdonald, however, convey a very different impression.[1] But it is at least true that when Mr. Macdougall reached Pembina on his way to Fort Garry he was met by a delegation of half-breeds, well instructed in his movements and sternly hostile to his mission. They opposed his advance in the name of the Provisional Council, and the menace was so effectual that after persistent and unsuccessful attempts to communicate with the Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company,

[1] Pope's "Memoirs of Sir John Macdonald," Vol. II., pages 51, 52.

he was forced to withdraw into United States territory. He then issued a proclamation commanding the insurgents to disperse, and threatening reprisals and penalties in case of contumacy and persistence in rebellion. But the proclamation was disregarded and his threats treated with contempt. The proceeding, in fact, rather aggravated than improved the situation. He next attempted with the aid of Col. Dennis, who had been sent West to superintend the surveys which chiefly precipitated the revolt, to raise a force of volunteers in order to put down the rebellion. In this, too, he failed, and at last, baffled and humiliated, he had no recourse but to make his way back to Ottawa.

It is, perhaps, not wide of the mark to say that the mass of the Liberal party secretly rejoiced over the personal discomfiture of Mr. Macdougall. It was felt that he had deserted George Brown at a critical juncture in the fortunes of the Liberal party, had driven a wedge of disruption into the Reform ranks, and had carried many waverers over to Sir John Macdonald. Liberals were, therefore, likely to regard any rupture of his new party relationships as a merited visitation of Providence. There was also a general suspicion that the Conservative leader had sent him out to the Western governorship in order to get rid of an unworkable colleague, and this notion but increased the very human satisfaction which many Liberals had in his failure and humiliation. However this may be, Mr.

Macdougall found himself loaded with censure, and held to the chief responsibility for the miscarriage of the plans of the Government, and for the outbreak of violence at Red River. He never quite recovered from this crushing blow to his political reputation, and though he was still to work in harness with Sir John Macdonald, he was never thereafter a considerable factor in the councils of the Conservative party.

Mr. Macdougall was a man of exceptional gifts, a brilliant and forceful journalist, and a remarkably effective platform speaker. Up to middle life he ranked as the peer of the greatest of his contemporaries. Thereafter he did nothing commensurate with his talents, and there is a touch of pathos in his failure to make new political alliances and in his inability or disinclination to make himself an enduring force in the country. He sat in the Commons until 1874, then in the Legislature of Ontario as member for Halton from 1875 to 1878, and again in the Commons from 1878 to 1882. He latterly professed political independence, but during the protectionist campaign he was in practical alliance with the Conservative party, and a vitriolic and destructive critic of the Mackenzie Administration. He was, however, excluded from the new Conservative Government, and thenceforward moved steadily towards greater freedom of utterance and wider divergence from the policy of Sir John Macdonald. So far had this detachment proceeded

by the end of the Parliament that in the general election of 1882 he stood as an independent Liberal candidate for Algoma, and again, in 1887, received the Liberal support in South Grenville. But he was unsuccessful in both contests, and finally withdrew altogether from active participation in public affairs.

On his return from the West he bitterly attacked Howe, and was at no pains to conceal his chagrin over the singular treatment he had received at the hands of the Government. It is not clear that he was altogether responsible for the conspicuous failure of his Western mission; and if we take only a surface view of these events, it is hard to understand why he was not more heartily supported by the men from whom he had received his commission. Sir John Macdonald contended that Mr. Macdougall had attempted to exercise authority before the Queen's proclamation formally annexing the territory to Canada had issued; that when he received his appointment, the date on which the union was to be consummated had not been settled; that he was sent out in advance of the formal ratification of the contract in order to ascertain upon the spot the needs of the country, the course the Government should pursue to avoid taking the settlers by surprise, and the best means of establishing friendly relations between the people of the North-West and the people of Canada.[1] Mr. Macdougall, however, seems to have understood that

[1] Hansard, 1875, pages 68, 69.

the proclamation would issue in advance of his entrance into the country, and that he was to assume the immediate and active direction of its affairs. Besides the high-handed and undiplomatic conduct of Col. Dennis, and the suspected machinations of Howe, then failing in judgment and declining in vigour, there was also suspicion of bad faith on the part of Governor McTavish of the Hudson's Bay Company, and even of positive collusion with Riel to check and thwart the plans of the Canadian Government. The weight of popular condemnation fell, however, upon the shoulders of Mr. Macdougall, and he had to conduct his defence almost single handed. He was strongly attacked in press and pamphlet, and he struck back with vigour and passion, and sometimes with an approach to ferocity. The most bitter and destructive of these attacks were laid at the door of Howe, and upon that assumption Mr. Macdougall addressed to Howe a series of open letters, which for heat, pungency, and invective, are not excelled in the political literature of Canada.[1]

He declared that he was disclosing no secret of the council room when he affirmed that in September, 1868, except Mr. Tilley and himself, every member of the Government was either indifferent or hostile to the acquisition of the North-West. They were not ready to act until it was discovered that a ministerial crisis respecting the route of the

[1] Macdougall's "Eight Letters to Joseph Howe."

Intercolonial Railway could be avoided only by an immediate agreement and immediate action to secure the transfer of the territories to Canada. He said that the opposing faction in the Cabinet, led by Sir George Cartier and Peter Mitchell, forced Sir John Macdonald, as the price of their consent to the acquisition of the western country, to agree to select the long route for the Intercolonial Railway in order to strengthen their hands in certain Quebec and New Brunswick constituencies. By this surrender, according to Mr. Macdougall, it was necessary to construct 138 additional miles of railway, to abandon the natural commercial route, to impose upon the country for all time the burden of this unnecessary mileage, and to injure permanently the Intercolonial as a medium of inter-provincial traffic. In his own words: "They threw eight millions of dollars into the sea." He bitterly assailed the Catholic clergy, whom he described as "the Jesuit allies" of the Government. "Driven and being driven," he said, "from nearly every country in Europe, these dark birds of evil omen seem to have alighted upon the northern shore of the finest lakes of America, and to have spread themselves under the name of Oblats over the vast regions and among the nomadic tribes of the North-West." He said the bill for the creation of the Province of Manitoba, submitted by the dominant faction in the Cabinet, was on the face of it a bill to establish French half-breed and foreign ecclesiastical

ascendency in Manitoba. He declared that it was proposed to exclude from the new province the important English and Protestant settlement of the Portage, and that "Father Richot expected by this arrangement to secure for himself and his faction the easy control of the new Government." Mr. Mackenzie, he said, with his compasses on the map, had proved the truth of this suspicion, and many of the supporters of the Government from Ontario had threatened to vote with the Opposition, and thus forced Ministers to enlarge the boundaries of the province and take in the English settlements on the borders of Lake Manitoba. Mr. Macdougall, it may be said, had an old quarrel with the Catholic Church, and was apt to suspect its motives and perhaps to find its hand in transactions with which it had little concern.[1]

Dealing with other phases of the controversy, he told Howe that: "The policy of the Canadian Government, as proved by the terms of Sir John Macdonald's bill of 1869 for the temporary government of the Territories, by the sending of a considerable number of officials from Canada, and instructing me to select others from the officials of

[1] Dr. George Bryce, in his "Remarkable History of the Hudson's Bay Company," says that while Bishop Taché was absent in Rome, "one of his most active priests left behind was Father Lestance, the prince of plotters, who has generally been credited with belonging to the Jesuit Order. Lestance had sedulously haunted the presence of the Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company; he was a daring and extreme man, and to him and his fellow-Frenchman, the curé of St. Norbert, much of Riel's obstinacy has been attributed."

the Hudson's Bay Company, was well adapted to excite the indignation and the moral, if not the physical, resistance of the people of Red River; while your seditious talk and bibulous fraternization with the leaders of the conspiracy at Fort Garry, and your offensive discourtesy to, and open denunciation of, the loyal portion of the inhabitants, were the most effective complement of the original design that could have been devised. The one provoked rebellion, the other promised it success." He added: "From the day on which you received notice at Ottawa of an armed resistance to my entrance into the Territory as the representative of the Canadian Government—information which did not surprise you—until my return to Canada, the policy of the Government was consistent, and Sir Francis Hincks tells us harmonious, in one direction, namely, to abandon the country." He rejoiced that the authority of the Dominion had been at length established over the vast regions of the West, and could now be endangered only by treason or incapacity at Ottawa. He averred, however, that incapacity reigned supreme in every department, and that treason was more than suspected. "Treason," he said, "not to the lawful sovereign of this Dominion only, but treason to the people of Canada, treason to the interests, civil and religious, of the people of the North-West, treason to human progress, freedom, and civilization in every province of the Dominion."

But Mr. Macdougall's letters were read in the light of his own failure and humiliation, and, it would seem, rather entertained the country than convinced it of the wisdom of his own proceedings. There was a germ of solid truth in his indictment, but he spoke with diminished prestige and lessened authority. He had abandoned one party, and was now abandoned by the other, and he therefore failed alike to reëstablish his own reputation, or greatly to damage the Administration. It requires a remarkable man, with sympathetic qualities which Mr. Macdougall did not possess, to move opinion single handed, in the teeth of set party views and active party machinery, and he must champion a cause which appeals strongly to the sentiment and even to the prejudices of the community.

Macdougall, however, is strongly supported by Dr. George Bryce in his "Remarkable History of the Hudson's Bay Company." Dr. Bryce insists that the Company, both in London and Fort Garry, was thoroughly loyal to British institutions, but that its government had become decrepit, and the chronic condition of helplessness and governmental decay was emphasized and increased by the illness of Governor McTavish. There was added to this condition of pitiful weakness, the unaccountable and culpable blundering of the Canadian Government. Cartier and Macdougall had learned in England that to send in a party of surveyors before the country was transferred would be offensive to

the Hudson's Bay Company. More offensive still was the method of conducting the expedition. It was a mark of sublime stupidity to profess, as the Canadian Government did, that the money spent on this survey was a benevolent device for relieving the sufferers from the grasshopper visitation. Moreover, the half-breeds engaged upon the work were harshly treated, and received poor wages, and payment even of such wages as they were promised was delayed. "The evidently selfish and grasping spirit shown in this expedition sent to survey and build the Dawson Road, yet turning aside to claim unoccupied lands, to sow the seeds of doubt and suspicion in the minds of a people hitherto secluded from the world, was most unpatriotic and dangerous." There was thus, upon the one hand, a helpless moribund government, without decision and without actual authority, and upon the other, an irritating, selfish and aggressive expedition, taking possession of the land before it was transferred to Canada, and assuming the air of conquerors.

Dr. Bryce goes on to say that the action of certain persons in the United States also constituted a potential factor in the rebellion. For twenty years and more the trade of the Red River Settlement had been largely carried on by way of St. Paul, in the State of Minnesota. The Hudson Bay route and York boat brigade were unable to compete with the facilities offered

by the approach of the railway to the Mississippi River. Accordingly long lines of Red River carts took loads of furs to St. Paul and brought back freight for the Company. The Red River trade was a recognized source of profit in St. Paul, and familiarity in trade led to an interest on the part of the Americans in the public affairs of Red River. Hot-headed and sordid people in Red River settlement had actually considered and discussed a connection between the settlement and the United States. At Pembina, on the border between Rupert's Land and the United States, lived a nest of desperadoes, willing to take any steps to accomplish their purposes. They had access to all the mails which came from England to Canada marked "via Pembina." Pembina was an outpost refuge for law-breakers and outcasts from the United States. Its people used all their power to disturb the peace of Red River settlement. Many Americans had also settled in the new village of Winnipeg, now rising near the walls of Fort Garry, and these men held private meetings looking to the creation of trouble, and the provocation of feeling that might lead to change of allegiance. "Furthermore," Dr. Bryce says, "the writer is able to state, on the information of a man high in the service of Canada, and a man not unknown in Manitoba, that there was a large sum of money, of which an amount was named as high as one million dollars, which was available in St. Paul for

the purpose of securing a hold by the Americans on the fertile plains of Rupert's Land." Here then, Dr. Bryce points out, was an agency of most dangerous proportions, an element in the village of Winnipeg able to control the election of the first delegate to the Settler's Convention, a desperate body of men on the border, who with Machiavellian persistence fanned the flame of discontent, and a reserve of power in St. Paul ready to take advantage of any emergency.

Dr. Bryce proceeds: "A still more insidious and threatening influence was at work. Here again the writer is aware of the gravity of the statement he is making, but he has evidence of the clearest kind for his position. A dangerous religious element in the country—ecclesiastics from old France—who had no love for Britain, no love for Canada, no love for any country, no love for society, no love for peace! These plotters were in close association with the half-breeds, dictated their policy, and freely mingled with the rebels. One of them was an intimate friend of the leader of the rebellion, consulted with him in his plans, and exercised a marked influence on his movements. This same foreign priest, with Jesuitical cunning, gave close attendance on the sick Governor, and through his family exercised a constant and detrimental power upon the only source of authority then in the land. Furthermore, an Irish student and teacher, with a Fenian hatred for all things British, was a 'familiar'

of the leader of the rebellion, and with true Milesian zeal advanced the cause of the revolt. Can a more terrible combination be imagined than this? A decrepit government with the executive officer sick; a rebellious and chronically dissatisfied Metis element; a government at Ottawa far removed by distance, committing with unvarying regularity blunder after blunder; a greedy and foreign cabal planning to seize the country, and a secret Jesuitical plot to keep the Governor from action and to incite the fiery Metis to revolt!" Dr. Bryce adds: "Probably the real attitude of Bishop Taché will never be known, though his strong French Canadian associations and love of British connection make it seem hardly possible that he could have been implicated in the rebellion."[1]

From the first the manifest desire of federal ministers was to overcome the revolt at Red River by conciliation and explanation. Upon the return of Mr. Macdougall they sent up Vicar General Thibault, for thirty-seven years a missionary in the West, Colonel de Salaberry, of Quebec, and Mr. Donald A. Smith, Chief Factor of the Hudson's Bay Company at Montreal, to "inquire into the causes of the rebellion and to explain to the people the intentions of the Canadian Government." Bishop Taché, who had large influence with the half-breeds, was recalled from the Œcumenical Council at Rome

[1] "The Remarkable History of the Hudson's Bay Company" by George Bryce, M.A., LL.D., pages 457-468.

and persuaded to aid the Commission to secure a pacific settlement. This desirable result would probably have been reached through the tact and sagacity of Mr. Smith and the good offices of Mgr. Taché, if other influences had not intervened to excite Riel and precipitate open hostilities. Many of the English settlers resented Riel's assumption of authority, and from the Portage, where English influence was dominant, a force started out to subdue the Metis and overthrow the rule of the provisional government. The expedition was led by Major Boulton, and was joined by a contingent of English half-breeds from Kildonan. This movement drove Riel to extreme measures in order to assert and maintain his authority. He set up a dictatorship, seized the federal commissioners, threatened and imprisoned the settlers who refused to recognize his leadership, overcame the weak remnant of the Portage expedition which reached the neighbourhood of Fort Garry, and finally put Thomas Scott to death with vulgar bravado, stolid heartlessness, and reckless contempt of consequences. Scott, one of the most impetuous and aggressive of western loyalists, was condemned without trial, or at least tried in his absence, and wholly without opportunity for defence, and shot down within an hour after he had learned that his death was decreed. He was a member of the powerful Orange Association, and the fact tended greatly to precipitate upon

the country one of those infernal sectarian quarrels which so often divide and bedevil the Canadian people.

The Government still held to counsels of patience and methods of conciliation. Mr. Donald A. Smith, who was captured with other loyalists, soon regained his liberty, and with Mgr. Taché laboured strenuously to pacify the settlers and reconcile Riel to the rule and authority of the Canadian Parliament. Father Richot, Mr. John Black, and Mr. Alfred H. Scott, were selected by a council of settlers to go to Ottawa and lay their grievance before the Government. In order to give confidence to the resident population and remove misapprehension, it was determined by the federal authorities to establish a provincial instead of a territorial government, and thus give the people of the settlements the full management of their local affairs. In March, 1870, a bill to this effect was introduced in Parliament by Sir John Macdonald, and the Province of Manitoba thereby created. The Liberal leaders argued that if this plan of responsible government had been adopted at the outset there would have been no revolt. But while they charged lack of vigilance and rashness of procedure against the Government, they insisted that a force must be sent out to subdue the rebellion and establish and enforce Canadian authority. Mr. Mackenzie, speaking for the Liberal party in Parliament, insisted that we must restore order in

the West peremptorily, "or cease to be a nation." He contended, in opposition to a motion by Mr. Masson of Quebec affirming the inexpediency of sending Imperial and Canadian troops to the North-West, that "they should send five, ten, twenty thousand men if necessary, but order should be restored." The Liberal leaders in Ontario vigorously emphasized Mr. Mackenzie's demand, and the murder of Scott and the vindication of Canadian authority in the West became burning issues in provincial politics.[1]

Mr. Macdougall, however, received his best support, and the agitation its keenest incitement, from the Canada First group, which now first set its impress upon the public life of the country. In 1869, five young men, all of whom were to achieve distinction, met at Ottawa, and with all the ardour and enthusiasm of youth and of a vigorous and sensitive patriotism, resolved to labour for the moderation of political partisanship, the mitigation of localism and sectionalism, the purification of politics, and the cultivation of a Canadian national sentiment. The five who formed the nucleus of the movement which developed into the Canada First Party, were Col. George T. Denison, W. A. Foster, R. G. Haliburton, Charles Mair, and H. J. Morgan. These were soon joined by John Schultz

[1] "The Hon. Alexander Mackenzie, His Life and Times," by William Buckingham, private secretary, and the Hon. George W. Ross, LL.D., page 263.

of Manitoba. Their first meetings were held in Mr. Morgan's room at the capital. Recruits were later added at Toronto, and something like a formal organization was effected. Early in the history of the movement the original half dozen were joined by J. D. Edgar, Thomas Walmsley, Joseph E. Macdougall, Hugh Scott, George R. Kingsmill, William Canniff, Richard Graham, and George M. Rae. These constituted the directing committee of the organization, and when Scott was murdered and Mair and Schultz arrested at Fort Garry, they set to work to excite public opinion against the timidity and vacillation which prevailed in the ministerial councils at Ottawa, and to force the equipment and despatch of a military expedition for the suppression of the revolt. Col. Denison was undoubtedly the leader of the movement as Foster and Haliburton were its most eloquent spokesmen. Kingsmill was then editor of the Toronto *Telegraph*, and Foster had free access to its columns. When Scott was murdered the *Telegraph* appeared with the "turned rules" and the black borders of mourning. The spirit and passion of Foster's editorial utterances, joined to the soberer but aggressive and unequivocal articles of *The Globe*, set Ontario aflame, and powerfully influenced the course of events. When Mair, Schultz, Dr. Lynch, and J. J. Setter, after their escape from Fort Garry, arrived at Toronto, they were made the guests of the city, and at the instance of the

Canada First group a public meeting was called to voice Toronto's sympathy for the refugees, and to express the popular demand for prompt and adequate measures to vindicate Canadian authority.

The meeting was called for April 6th, 1870, at St. Lawrence Hall, but such a vast crowd assembled that it was necessary to adjourn outside, and from the portico of the hall the speakers addressed eight or ten thousand people. Mayor Medcalf presided, and speeches were made by the Hon. Matthew Crooks Cameron, Schultz, Mair, Lynch, and Setter, and the active leaders of the Canada First movement. The resolutions adopted by the meeting welcomed Dr. Schultz and his companions from the Red River, "who fearlessly and at the sacrifice of their liberty and property have nobly resisted the usurpation of power by the murderer Riel"; affirmed that the state of anarchy and rebellion prevailing in the North-West Territories called for the prompt and energetic action of the Dominion Government; expressed the strongest indignation at "the cold-blooded murder of poor Scott"; and declared that "it would be a gross injustice to the loyal inhabitants of Red River, humiliating to our national honour, and contrary to all British traditions for our Government to receive, negotiate, or treat with the emissaries of those who have robbed, imprisoned and murdered loyal Canadians whose only fault was zeal for British insti-

tutions, whose only crime was devotion to the old flag."[1] A few days later a great Liberal demonstration was held on Front Street opposite John Hallam's premises, and an audience of six or seven thousand persons was roused to enthusiasm and excitement by similar trenchant condemnation of the murder of Scott and the conduct of federal ministers.

The delegates from Riel's Provisional Council were then on their way to Ottawa to lay the grievances of the settlers before the Dominion Government, and the *Telegraph* of April 8th had an article by Foster, headed "The Messengers of the Murderer—Are they to be Received?" The writer asked if Sir John Macdonald proposed to bring the Government and the people of Canada down to the level of Riel and his fellow rebels, to treat with, and make himself and his colleagues the equals of murderers, and to shake the hands that were red with Canadian blood? Were a thousand commissioners to come down from Riel, their presence should not prevent the Government from sending a force to the country. A force must be sent under any circumstances. Our law and our authority must be firmly established. The country must be opened up to our people, and loyal men must be protected in the enjoyment of their rights for all time to

[1] During the troubles at Red River, a paper called the *New Nation*, issued as the organ of the Provisional Government, openly advocated union with the United States.

come. This could be done only by the exercise of military power. Even though Riel should make an unconditional surrender, the country would still be compelled to send soldiers to the territory in order to prevent further trouble, and in order to see that when once hoisted over Fort Garry, the old flag should never again be hauled down. What could Sir John Macdonald hope to gain by receiving the rebels? Was the strange announcement that the Premier had made on the floor of the House another proof of the power of Sir George Cartier? Must this be taken as more evidence of the fact that Sir George was the leader and Sir John the follower? Cartier, in order to satisfy the people of his province was determined to receive the rebel emissaries. Was Sir John Macdonald, the representative of the Province of Ontario, compelled to bow to that determination, and forced to prepare the public for the coming disgrace by announcing his intention in the Parliament of the country? Sir John Macdonald, Foster said, must be breathing an atmosphere vastly different from that which prevailed at Toronto, or he could not dare to talk of trifling with the national honour. He would not dare to hint at this national disgrace. During that self-same hour that his solitary voice proclaimed the coming disgrace, ten thousand voices in the capital of Ontario united in declaring that there should be no treaty with traitors, no intercourse with murderers, and the shouts of these ten thousand voices

found an echo in the hearts of all the loyal people throughout the length and breadth of the land. This was no question of party. This was a question of patriotism, and the man who trifled with it trifled with the honour and fair fame of Canada. The higher his position the greater his crime. Sir John Macdonald must remember that if these messengers of murderers were received it would be an everlasting and intolerable disgrace to the Canadian people. He must remember that by holding communication with them for one moment he would give his opponents fresh power, and drive from his side thousands who had ever been his friends. He must remember that what ten thousand people in Toronto had said a million people in Ontario would repeat. He must remember that the Canadian people valued their national honour as they did their lives, and were prepared to sacrifice their lives rather than that their honour should be tarnished by one spot or blemish. And let him remember that to the people who thus held their honour with their lives, he and his colleagues had soon to render an account.

A few days later, under the caption "Riel's Ruffians," Foster wrote; "The First Minister of the Crown announced in the House a few days ago that these men are to be received by the Government, their complaints are to be heard, their bill of rights is to be carefully perused, and probably every demand they make is to be granted. In the whole

history of the Empire we can find no parallel for this disgrace. It has never been the policy of Great Britain to treat with rebels in arms against her authority. It has been her policy, and the policy of all other civilized nations as well, to trounce them into submission first, and listen to their complaints afterwards. But we do things in another fashion in Canada in this nineteenth century. We allow rebels to kill and rob our people, to laugh at our authority, to insult our representative, to trample our flag in the dust, and then, after they have done all these things, nay, while they are actually committing these outrages, we receive their agents and treat with them for terms. . . . . It is not too late to prevent this disgrace. The ruffians have not yet arrived in our country. It is an easy thing to send them word to the effect that their visit will be fruitless, and advise them to return to the man who sent them."

The statement of Sir John Macdonald in the House of Commons to which Foster took such strong exception, was elicited by a question from John Hillyard Cameron. He had asked how a delegation coming with their hands red with the blood of a fellow Canadian would be treated. The Prime Minister in reply eulogized Judge Black, the leader of the delegation, and intimated that he and his companions would be received by the Government. Mr. Mackenzie promptly dissented. He agreed with Sir John Macdonald's estimate of

Black, but urged that Richot and Scott were accomplices of Riel and ought not to be received. This was the general feeling in Toronto and throughout Ontario. Public meetings like those at Toronto were held at Ottawa, at Hamilton, at London, and at other centres in the province, and one also at Montreal. Everywhere energetic protests were entered against the projected negotiations with the agents of the insurgents. There were even threats that Richot and Scott would not be allowed to pass through Toronto, and Hugh Scott, a brother of Riel's victim, had a warrant issued for their arrest as accomplices in the murder. When it was found that the delegates had taken alarm and had proceeded to Ottawa by way of Ogdensburg, the warrant was sent on to the capital, and there, on April 14th, Richot and Scott were arrested. They came before Mr. Justice Galt on a writ of *habeas corpus*. John Hillyard Cameron appeared for the delegates, and was thought to have been directly inspired by Sir John Macdonald. Denison and Foster were active in these proceedings. Denison had gone to Ottawa with Schultz and his companions from the Red River, and remained at the capital to press the prosecution. The delegates were remanded again and again, but it was manifestly impossible under the circumstances to secure adequate evidence to justify the charge. They were at length released, and the proceedings abandoned.

The Government seemed, however, to bow to public opinion, and towards the middle of May a punitive expedition, under the command of Col. Wolseley, started by way of Collingwood and Thunder Bay, over the old fur traders' route for the Red River. But the despatch of the military contingent did not silence nor abate the activity of the faction in the Cabinet which was determined to compose the quarrel by conciliation rather than by force. Just at this time Sir John Macdonald was prostrated by a long and serious illness, and Sir George Cartier, who held the portfolio of Militia and Defence, became the Leader of the Government. In July, Lord Lisgar was at Niagara Falls, and Mr. Haliburton, one of the leaders of the Canada First party, who was leaving for England by way of New York, sought an interview with the Governor-General in order to urge that vigilance should be exercised against a possible attempt to introduce the French laws of Quebec into the North-West. His suspicions were excited when he found that Lisgar and his suite had moved from the Clifton House to a small hotel at the Suspension Bridge. Suspicion deepened into alarm when in the course of conversation the Governor-General mentioned that within a few days he would be joined there by Sir George Cartier, Mgr. Taché, and Mr. Archibald, who had succeeded Mr. Macdougall as Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba. Haliburton said nothing to Lisgar, but he jumped to the con-

clusion that a particular and important action was contemplated. He assumed that an amnesty for the Red River insurgents was to be proclaimed, and Mr. Archibald and Mgr. Taché were to be sent west through United States territory with the writ of clemency. He wired Schultz, who was then at London, that mischief was afloat, and urged by letter that active steps should be taken to defeat the plans of Cartier and force Archibald to go west through Canadian territory in rear of the Wolseley expedition. Schultz communicated with the Canada First group at Toronto, and a call was sent out for a public meeting to protest against the suspected intention of the Government, and check the premature grant of amnesty to the insurgents.[1] The meeting was fixed for July 22nd, and in addition to the formal posters the fences and bill-boards of Toronto were decorated with a series of inflammatory placards. One of these asked, "Shall French rebels rule our Dominion?"; another, "Shall our Queen's representative go a thousand miles through a foreign territory to demean himself to a thief and a murderer?" Other placards read: "Will the volunteers accept defeat at the hand of the Minister of Militia?"; "Orangemen, is Brother Scott forgotten already?"; "Men of Ontario, shall Scott's blood cry in vain for vengeance?" It is hardly necessary to observe that in Toronto

[1] See an article on Robert Grant Haliburton by Col. Geo. T. Denison in the *Canadian Magazine* for June, 1901.

such placards were likely to secure a successful meeting.

The chief speakers on this occasion were Mr. Macdougall, Mr. D'Arcy Boulton, Mr. Kenneth Mackenzie, Q.C., Mr. J. D. Edgar, Captain Bennett, Col. Denison, and Mr. Foster. A resolution moved by Mr. Macdougall declared that the proposal to recall, at the request of the rebel government, the expedition on its way to Fort Garry to establish law and order, would be an act of supreme folly, an abdication of authority, destructive of all fitness for the protection afforded to loyal subjects by a constitutional government, and a death blow to our national honour. Another, moved by Mr. Edgar, recited that the overthrow by the rebels of the existing government in the Red River Territory by force of arms, the seizure and appropriation to their own purposes of private property, the imprisonment and ill treatment of Canadians and loyal natives, the barbarous murder of one of their prisoners, Thomas Scott, the cruel expulsion in mid-winter of those who refused to join them in their unlawful project, and their extravagant demands upon the Canadian Government, under threat of further outrages and the transfer of their allegiance to a foreign country, deprived the leaders of the conspiracy of all sympathy, and called for the prompt punishment of the perpetrators of such crimes. Still another, moved by Col. Denison, affirmed that in view of

the proposed amnesty to Riel, and withdrawal of the expedition, it was necessary to declare that "The Dominion must and shall have the North-West Territories in fact as well as in name, and if our Government, through weakness or treachery, cannot or will not protect our citizens in it, and recalls our volunteers, it will then become the duty of the people of Ontario to organize a scheme of armed immigration in order that those Canadians who have been driven from their homes may be reinstated, that with the many who desire to settle in new fields they may have an assured guarantee against the repetition of such outrages as have disgraced our country in the past, that the majesty of the law may be vindicated against all criminals, no matter by whom instigated or by whom protected, and that we may never again see the flag of our ancestors trampled in the dust, or a foreign emblem flaunting itself in any part of our broad Dominion."

The protest was so spirited and so emphatic, and public opinion in Ontario responded so promptly, that Cartier was forced to halt, and Mr. Archibald took his way over the "snow road," as it was called, in the rear of the Wolseley expedition. The journey was long and difficult, and beset with such formidable obstacles that it was well on towards the end of August when the expedition reached Fort Garry. It was then found that Riel and his comrades had fled, and that all resistance to the peaceful occupation of the Territory by Canada had collapsed.

Mr. Archibald, more fortunate than Mr. Macdougall, reached Fort Garry early in September, and on the 6th of that month entered upon his duties as Lieutenant-Governor of the new province. A year later Manitoba was threatened with a Fenian invasion under O'Donoghue, who had been associated with Riel in the Red River insurrection, and there was grave fear that the French half-breeds of Manitoba would join hands with O'Donoghue and his confederates. Archibald made overtures to Riel and Lepine who were still the recognized leaders of the Metis. They responded to his appeal, and organized the inhabitants for the defence of the country.

The Governor set a high value upon the services performed by Riel and Lepine in this connection, and used language that was afterwards construed as a promise of immunity for the offences committed during the Red River outbreak. But in Ontario, the agitation for the punishment of Scott's murderers was vigorously maintained, and the argument of Ministers that the federal authorities ceased to have jurisdiction when the provincial government was constituted, was neither well received nor generally accepted. The common opinion of Ontario was that the execution of Scott was hardly distinguishable from deliberate murder; and separated as we now are from the passion and clamour of that time, it is not easy to reach any other conclusion. But even if this be admitted, the

fact does not constitute an adequate justification for the action of the Ontario Legislature in offering a reward of $5,000 for Riel's apprehension. The question lay within the province of the federal authorities, and no good purpose was served by making the death of Scott an issue in local politics, and enmeshing legitimate provincial questions in the incidents of a revolt in Manitoba.[1] But public feeling was greatly excited, the Orange Association was in a vengeful temper, and it was natural that the Liberal politicians, who had so often felt the force of that powerful body at the polls, should take advantage of the unusual situation, and profit by the keen and far-reaching anger Scott's execution had evoked.

On the other hand, the French-Canadians of Quebec were linked to the Metis of the Red River by the sympathetic ties of blood and speech, and politicians in that province industriously exploited

[1] In 1871, on the eve of the general election, the Ontario Legislature, on motion of Mr. Blake, adopted a resolution declaring: "That the cold-blooded murder for his out-spoken loyalty to the Queen, of Thomas Scott, lately a resident of this province, and an immigrant thence to the North-West, has impressed this House with a deep feeling of sorrow and indignation, and in the opinion of this House, every effort should be made to bring to trial the perpetrators of this great crime, who as yet go unwhipt of justice." In January, 1872, after Mr. Blake had become Premier of Ontario, a second resolution was adopted, affirming: "That this House feels bound to express its regret that no effectual steps have been taken to bring to justice the murderers of Thomas Scott, and is of opinion that something should be done to that end." In accordance with this resolution, at the request of Mr. Blake, $5,000 was appropriated as a reward for Riel's apprehension.

this sympathetic relationship for personal and party advantage. It is true that only thirteen members of the House of Commons voted to strike out the sum of $1,460,000 put into the Supply Bill to meet the costs of the Red River expedition, and to open up the western country. But this vote did not represent the real state of feeling in Quebec, nor stay the agitation for clemency for Riel and his associates. There is hardly any doubt that Sir George Cartier was a determined champion of Riel in the Cabinet, and it seems clear that he sought a way to baulk the Wolseley expedition. In the general election of 1872, Cartier was defeated in Montreal East, and aside from other exceptional influences contributing to that result, it is believed that the militia vote was cast for his opponent in almost a solid body in protest against his attitude towards the Canadian militia, his excessive consideration for Riel and his allies, and his ill-concealed opposition to the employment of force against the insurgents. It was, however, mainly due to the active intervention of Bishop Bourget and his ecclesiastical subordinates that Cartier was beaten. This intervention was provoked partly by his alliance with the Sulpicians against the Bishop's project to divide the old parish of Notre Dame, of which the disciples of St. Sulpice were pastors by right of their charter, and partly by resentment at Sir John Macdonald's refusal to disallow the New Brunswick School Bill of 1871, by which the

separate school system of that province was abolished in law, even if it still exists in practice. Cartier was afterwards returned for the western constituency of Provencher, which contained the bulk of the French population of Manitoba, and Riel's name was signed to one of the telegrams of congratulation he received from his new parliamentary borough. Ill-health, however, forced him to go abroad, and he died in England in May, 1873.

In the general election of January 22nd, 1874, which brought the Liberal party into office, Riel was elected as his successor in the representation of Provencher. Notwithstanding that he was now under indictment in Manitoba for the murder of Scott, he came to Ottawa and managed to sign the roll of the Commons and subscribe the oath. When his presence at the capital became known, a warrant for his arrest was procured, but it is doubtful if it was intended to be executed. If he had directly invited arrest, he would hardly have been accommodated. There was general suspicion, and possibly in high quarters particular knowledge, that his freedom had been at least equivocally guaranteed by the Queen's ministers, and that the pledges of amnesty, if not legally conclusive, were too clear and too direct to be lightly violated. But it was at least permissible to question his right to sit in Parliament, and necessary to make some concession to public opinion. Besides, the Conservative party had passed into opposition, and a subject which had

given infinite trouble to the Conservative leaders was now available for the harassment of the Liberal party. Accordingly, on March 31st, 1874, Mr. Mackenzie Bowell moved that Riel be ordered to attend in his place in Parliament on the next day. As he failed to appear, he was expelled two weeks afterwards by a vote of 124 to 68, and a new writ issued for Provencher.[1]

[1] The principal sources of this chapter are Hansard; the newspapers and pamphlets of the time; "Canada under the Administration of the Earl of Dufferin," by Dr. George Stewart; "The Remarkable History of the Hudson's Bay Company," by Dr. George Bryce; the "History of Canada," by Dr. W. H. Withrow; "The Great Company," by Beckles Willson; Pope's "Memoirs of Sir John Macdonald," and the Buckingham-Ross "Life of Alexander Mackenzie."

CHAPTER VIII

THE AMNESTY

IT was on the question of Riel's expulsion that Mr. Laurier first addressed the House of Commons in English. The main issue to be determined was whether or not Riel had received an explicit and unconditional promise of amnesty. There was abundant evidence to support this contention. In March, 1870, Mgr. Taché, professing to speak for both the Canadian and Imperial Governments, gave Riel an assurance of amnesty wide enough to cover the murder of Scott and all other offences committed during the outbreak. In June, 1870, Richot, Black, and Scott, who laid the grievances of the settlers before the federal Ministers, assured Mgr. Taché that they had received an equally definite promise of complete amnesty for Riel and his associates. A letter from Sir George Cartier to Mgr. Taché confirmed the promise of amnesty. Parliament was also bound to consider the acceptance by Mr. Archibald of the services of Riel and Lepine when Manitoba was threatened with a Fenian invasion, and the Governor's public recognition of their timely and useful work in organizing the people for defence. There were three motions before the House. Mr. Mackenzie Bowell moved

for Riel's immediate expulsion. Mr. Holton moved to defer action until a report on the question of amnesty could be had from the committee which had just been appointed to inquire into the causes of the Red River troubles. Mr. Mousseau moved for immediate and unconditional amnesty.

Mr. Laurier's speech was made in support of the Holton amendment. He said that amendment laid down the only course that the House should pursue, and that he would be guilty of an act of cowardice if for any motive whatever he allowed himself to be turned away from the defence of the opinions which he regarded as the soundest and safest on the subject. He said that between Riel and himself there was no bond of sympathy. The House was called upon to exercise strictly judicial functions. There was no proof before Parliament of an indictment against the member for Provencher. It was impossible, therefore, to pretend that he was a fugitive from justice. A warrant that was not executed was no legal proof of an indictment. He pointed out that over and over again Riel had claimed that the old Administration had promised him an amnesty, that this claim was repeated and emphasized by his friends and sympathizers, and that ministers then in office could not be induced to confirm or deny these statements. If Riel had this promise of amnesty in the Queen's name for all acts committed in Manitoba, as head of the provisional government, it was not reasonable that

he should now desire to go before the courts, and it was not just to brand him as contumacious and a fugitive from justice. The committee which had been appointed to determine finally whether or not an amnesty had been promised had just begun its work, and it would be inconsistent and illogical for the House to come to any decision upon the question until the committee had reported. He dealt with the case of Sadlier before the Imperial Parliament in 1857, which Mr. Bowell had cited in support of his motion. Sadlier was charged with fraud in connection with a Tipperary Bank, and had fled before a warrant for his arrest could be executed. Mr. Laurier showed that a motion for expulsion was rejected because the member under attack could still come before the courts to stand his trial, and it would, therefore, have been premature to declare him contumacious. He detailed the careful and methodical steps taken to notify Sadlier of the order commanding him to appear in his seat, showed that no action at all had been taken to serve Riel with the order for his appearance in Parliament, and contended that until this was done or attempted, Mr. Bowell's motion ought not to prevail. The opportunity to make defence was the right and privilege of every British subject. Many decisions, just in themselves and wholly equitable, had been reversed by the higher courts of England solely because the party condemned had not been notified to defend himself.

He opposed Mr. Mousseau's motion with equal logic and vigour. He showed again that the House had unanimously named a committee to inquire into the whole question of the amnesty, pointed out that at that very hour the committee was sitting, and Mgr. Taché was giving his evidence, and argued that to declare an amnesty before the committee had well entered upon its work, would be premature, irrational, and absurd. He contended that Mr. Mousseau's chief object was to compromise the Administration, but confessed that his own mind leaned towards amnesty in view of the recognition Riel had received from the former Administration. He showed that at least Sir George Cartier had treated with Riel as the head of an organized government, and had received from Riel's delegates their letters of credit signed with his own hand. If this were true, then the logical consequence must follow, and the amnesty must be granted. He admitted that the execution of Scott was a crime, but argued that it was a political act, and that Riel in signing the warrant for Scott's execution simply gave effect to the sentence of a court. However illegal was the court, or however iniquitous the sentence, the fact alone that the sentence was pronounced by a court, and that that court existed *de facto* was sufficient to impart an exclusively political character to the execution. He refused to regard Riel as a rebel. "How," he asked, "was it possible to use such language?

What act of rebellion did he commit? Did he ever raise any other standard than the national flag? Did he ever proclaim any other authority than the sovereign authority of the Queen? No, never. His whole crime and the crime of his friends was that they wanted to be treated like British subjects, and not to be bartered away like common cattle." He said that he would regard the events at Red River as constituting a glorious page in our history if they had not been stained with the blood of Scott. "But," he said, "such is the state of human nature and of all that is human; good and evil are constantly intermingled; the most glorious cause is not free from impurity, and the vilest may have its noble side." He closed with these words: "We have no proof of the facts on which the motion for expulsion rests, and to adopt that motion would be not only to commit an arbitrary act, but to establish a precedent which will be a perpetual danger to our free institutions."[1]

The speech did not change the mind of Parliament, but it greatly enhanced the speaker's reputation. The argument was strong, consistent, and logical, the English limpid and classic, the manner restrained and elevated. It was this speech which Dr. Fréchette said "carried him at one bound to the distinction of being almost without a peer among the English-speaking debaters of the Dominion;" and at least the performance definitely

[1] See "Wilfrid Laurier on the Platform," Quebec, 1890, pages 21, 40.

determined his right to an influential voice in the public councils. The Montreal *Herald* said: "Mr. Laurier made a magnificent speech in support of Mr. Holton's amendment. It was the best of the whole debate—calm, logical, and thoughtful. He has made his mark and placed himself in the front rank of our debaters." It is fair to say that the speech was not well received in Ontario, nor was it satisfactory to the more turbulent elements in Quebec, which Mr. Mousseau represented.

It would seem at this distance, and in the light of all that has been revealed, that Riel's expulsion was a natural proceeding, while the evidence which Mr. Laurier advanced to show that he had received assurances of amnesty was conclusive. It is worth while, perhaps, to quote here Earl Carnarvon's despatch to Lord Dufferin in this connection. The Secretary of State for the Colonies said: "Although a murder such as that of Scott cannot be allowed to go unpunished on the ground that it was connected with political disturbances, yet in so far as it did result from political circumstances those who were guilty of it may be deemed to have earned a merciful consideration through their subsequent good service to the State, and that for these services their life should be spared. While this is no doubt the judicial construction of evidence reported by the special committee, it is quite evident that it was not the sense in which the Government was understood either by Archbishop Taché or by the

delegates from the provisional government. That the impression was left upon their minds that a full and unconditional amnesty would be granted if they recognized the authority of the Dominion Government there cannot be the slightest doubt on reading the evidence."

It was not until the session of 1877 that Parliament saw the end of this unfortunate and embittered controversy. In 1875, Mr. Mackenzie asked Parliament to grant a full amnesty to all persons concerned in the insurrection except Riel, Lepine, and O'Donoghue. For Riel and Lepine he recommended five years' banishment from the country. But as O'Donoghue had attempted to throw a body of Fenians into the North-West, no measure of clemency in his behalf was suggested. Lepine had been arrested at the instance of the provincial authorities, convicted of complicity in the murder of Scott, and sentenced to death. Lord Dufferin, however, intervened to save him from the gallows. He undertook, under the Royal Instructions which gave the Governor-General power to dispense with the advice of his ministers under special circumstances, to say that the case had passed beyond the province of departmental administration, and that he was empowered "to exercise the prerogative of the Crown according to his independent judgment and on his own personal responsibility." Mr. Blake, at a subsequent session, persuaded Parliament to demand from the

Imperial authorities such amendment of the Royal Instructions as would prevent the Governor-General exercising the prerogative of pardon except in accordance with the advice of his ministers. In the meantime, however, Lord Dufferin did act on his own responsibility, and commuted the sentence of death passed upon Lepine to two years' imprisonment and permanent forfeiture of political rights. Less fortunate than his leader, Lepine served out the term of imprisonment. Mr. Mousseau, in 1875, renewed his motion for unconditional amnesty, but it received only twenty-three votes, and only fifty votes were cast against Mr. Mackenzie's motion for amnesty to Riel and Lepine, conditional upon five years' banishment, and unconditional pardon for all other participants in the insurrection.

Mr. Laurier also spoke during this debate, and some of his sentences are worth quoting. He said: "The question would be decided at once and forever if decided in a sense of leniency, but not if decided in a harsh sense, in a sense of mistaken justice; for there was no more certain fact, as proved by the most unerring testimony of historical events, than that political offences must sooner or later be forgiven." He said: "The Liberal party of Quebec did not make it a question of race or religion, but dealt with it solely as a question of justice. For his part he regretted that it was so often deemed necessary to remind the House that our nation is composed of different creeds and races, and that

the law gives to each and all in this Dominion a full and equal share of liberty and happiness. It was true they were separated by their origin and religion, but they were united by a common aim and common interests." He insisted that these were the principles of the Liberals of Quebec, and they "intended not only upon the floor of this House, but also throughout this Dominion, to put down questions of race and religion." He accepted the conditional amnesty proposed by the Government as embodying the view of the Imperial authorities, he recognized that complete amnesty could not be had, and he held that the loyal acceptance of Mr. Mackenzie's motion by the people of Quebec "would have the effect of burying the past in oblivion, and of promoting a policy of self-respect between the two great provinces of the Dominion."[1]

The formal expulsion of Riel from Parliament in April, 1874, was not final. He was returned again at the new election for Provencher that was held five months afterwards. On February 15th, 1875, Mr. Mackenzie laid before Parliament the sentence of outlawry which had been passed upon Riel by Chief Justice Wood of Manitoba five days before, and then on February 24th asked the House to declare that Riel, according to the record, had been adjudged an outlaw for felony. The motion was accepted, the seat thus vacated, and Riel was not again a candidate. In the session of 1876, and

[1] Hansard, February 12th, 1875, Pages 116, 119.

again in 1877, Mr. Costigan moved that O'Donoghue be included in the conditional amnesty granted to Riel and Lepine. In each case the motion was opposed by the Government, and therefore defeated. But if Mr. Costigan did not succeed in Parliament, he undoubtedly damaged the Administration in the country. Persistent appeals were made to the Irish Catholic element to revenge the Government's treatment of O'Donoghue, and even Sir John Macdonald turned the rejection of Mr. Costigan's motion to excellent political account.

There is hardly any better illustration of Sir John Macdonald's remarkable capacity for the management of diverse elements than is revealed in his method of presenting O'Donoghue to the Irish electors. For example, he said at Cobourg, where there is a considerable Irish Catholic population: "O'Donoghue, by his industry and speculation had got together lands and money in Manitoba, but he was only an Irishman and must stay out of the country. He was proud to say that he and his friends had voted to have O'Donoghue treated as the others, and he would call the attention of his Roman Catholic friends to the fact that the most prominent men who had claimed rights for O'Donoghue were his friends, Mackenzie Bowell and John White, both of them Grand Masters among the Orangemen." This series of parliamentary events furnishes a striking illustration of the glorious freedom of opposition. Mr. Mackenzie Bowell attacked

the Government for recommending even conditional amnesty for Riel and Lepine. Mr. Mousseau demanded unconditional amnesty. Mr. Costigan insisted that the leader of a Fenian invasion should be covered by the Crown's clemency. Each damaged the Administration, while the unity and strength of the Opposition were hardly affected.

It is not now contended that the insurrection in Manitoba was consciously provoked by the Canadian authorities. It was never intended to disturb or dispossess the Red River settlers. It was not intended to imperil any man's possessions, or abridge any man's rights. But ministers were careless and badly advised. They did not see far, if they saw at all, into conditions in the West. They did not understand that the settlers were peculiarly favourable to the easy lordship of the Hudson's Bay Company. They forgot that the Metis spoke another language, and could not know what status they would acquire under a territorial government, and had small comprehension of the genius of British institutions. They forgot that these men had the right of birth on the soil, that they must be apprehensive of their security of tenure, and would naturally resent any arbitrary transfer of their allegiance to an authority which was still alien, remote, and misunderstood. So the more adequate punishment of Riel and Lepine for the execution of Scott could have been very easily accomplished. But the Government of Sir John Macdonald was

hampered by party considerations, and unwilling to estrange Quebec by the adoption of prompt and stern measures against the insurgents, or even by too ready submission to the vehement clamour of the English-speaking provinces. When it is remembered that Riel was sent out of the country by arrangement between Archbishop Taché and Sir John Macdonald, and that Lepine was the beneficiary of a similar arrangement between the Archbishop and Sir George Cartier, and that both were maintained abroad upon funds supplied by Cartier and Macdonald, an element of comedy is introduced into a series of events which in other respects are grave and sombre enough.[1] The record, as Mr. Laurier said, is indelibly stained by the blood of Scott, but outside of that wanton and brutal murder, the Red River settlers showed only the spirit of British freemen, and contended only for those rights and privileges which no race of men worth foothold in the earth have ever tamely surrendered.

[1] On December 27th, 1871, Sir John Macdonald addressed a letter to Archbishop Taché, marked "private and strictly confidential," in which he said, "I have been able to make the arrangement for the individual that we have talked about. I now send you a sight draft on the Bank of Montreal for $1,000. I need not press upon your Grace the importance of the money being paid to him periodically (say monthly or quarterly), and not in a lump, otherwise the money would be wasted, and our embarrassment begin again. The payment should spread over a year." In his evidence before the Parliamentary Committee, Archbishop Taché said that he had received a letter from Sir George Cartier in which an allusion was made to the draft which had been sent him by Sir John Macdonald, and stating that it would be advisable that Lepine should leave also. He then saw Lieutenant-Governor Archibald

The Red River insurrection was not provoked by deliberate intention to ignore the rights, or even the susceptibilities of the French settlers, but by the premature action, the blunders and misadventures, which marked the final steps of the negotiations for the incorporation of the West into the Canadian Confederation. As Lord Lisgar said in the last speech which he delivered as Governor-General of Canada: "The troubles which ensued in Manitoba were due rather to misunderstanding and misapprehension, arising from ignorance, than to any rooted policy. They were overcome by steadiness, patient explanation, and the occasional display of an adequate armed force to sustain civil authority."[1] It cannot be said that Riel was worthy of his position of leadership. But it often happens that men of just such intemperate zeal and vagrant impulse seize the direction of sudden enterprises, and take on something of the dignity and consequence of events which are long shaping, and at last spring spontaneously from ripened conditions. He is not a figure that history will put among its gods, or that

on the question of money. The Lieutenant-Governor and the Archbishop called on Mr. Donald A. Smith, and Mr. Smith furnished £600 sterling on the understanding that he would be re-imbursed by the Canadian Government. The Archbishop added to the amount from the $1,000 previously provided, $200, and thus made up $1,600 each for Riel and Lepine, which he gave them in accordance with their demand, to enable them to go and live outside the Territory. The remainder of the $1,000 he kept in the bank, to be used as required for the support of their families.

[1] Speech at Montreal, January 20th, 1872.

democracy will deify in other generations, however the patient, deep-searching historian may esteem the events with which his name must always be associated.

It is worth while to look still more closely into the objects and achievements of the Canada First party. The movement set deep marks upon the politics of Canada, and its story forms a more significant chapter in our history than any historian has yet recognized. Foster's fame does not rest upon the inflammatory articles in the *Daily Telegraph*, nor even upon his energetic management of public opinion in Ontario during the crisis of the Red River insurrection. He has left some admirable literary remnants and some political documents of distinct and permanent value. In 1871 he sent out an inspiring and scholarly address which stands as the truest interpretation of the aims of this group of patriots, and the best expression of the hopes and aspirations which were then moving in the breasts of the younger and more ambitious citizens of the new Confederation. Foster said in the course of this sagacious and eloquent deliverance: "Let but our statesmen do their duty, with the consciousness that all the elements which constitute greatness are now awaiting a closer combination; that all the requirements of a higher national life are here available for use; that nations do not spring Minerva-like into existence; that strength and weakness are relative terms, a few not

being necessarily weak because they are few, nor a multitude necessarily strong because they are many; that hesitating, doubting, fearing, whining over supposed or even actual weakness, and conjuring up possible dangers, is not the true way to strengthen the foundations of our Dominion, or to give confidence in its continuance. Let each of us have faith in the rest, and cultivate a broad feeling of regard for mutual welfare, as becomes those who are building up a fabric that is destined to endure. Thus stimulated and thus strengthened by a common belief in a glorious future, and with a common watchword to give unity to thought and power to endeavour, we shall attain the fruition of our cherished hopes, and give our beloved country a proud position among the nations of the earth."[1] This teaching is still necessary in Canada, and was doubly so in the infancy of Confederation, when the flame of national sentiment burned low, when sectionalism was rife and faction strong and relentless, when the hearts of many failed them for fear, and all the good promise of the Commonwealth was obscured by the difficulties and perplexities of the immediate hour, and the half-conscious apprehension of the formidable tasks of the future.

During four or five eventful years Canada First thrived, and from time to time the pioneers were

[1] Canada First; a Memorial of the Late W. A. Foster, Q.C., pages 46, 47.

joined by other young Canadians of like eager spirit and single minded purpose to foster national sentiment, and establish faith and pride in the new institutions and the new conditions. Among these might be mentioned William H. Howland, Thomas Moss, W. G. McWilliams, Hugh Blain, W. B. McMurrich, J. K. Macdonald, Frederick Fenton, G. W. Badgerow, C. R. W. Biggar, James R. Roaf, A. S. Irving, A. M. Rosebrugh, W. T. O'Reilly, James H. Morris, Frank McKelcan, and James H. Coyne. It is said that the motto, "Canada First" was evolved from a suggestion made by J. D. Edgar; and it is likely that the spirit of protectionism, which was to find expression in the formal platform adopted in 1874, represented the increasing influence of W. H. Howland in the councils of the movement. In the autumn of 1873, Thomas Moss became the Liberal candidate for West Toronto for the House of Commons, and the Canada First group, while declining identification with the Liberal party, gave Moss a hearty support, and greatly assisted in securing his election. His declaration, "Canada before any party; the country before any faction," breathed the very spirit of the movement.

In 1874, the Canadian National Association was formed and the National Club of Toronto established. Mr. W. H. Howland was the president of the new Association, and Mr. W. G. McWilliams its secretary, while Mr. Goldwin Smith

was the first president of the National Club. The platform of the Association embraced:—(1) British connection, consolidation of the Empire, and in the meantime a voice in treaties affecting Canada; (2) closer trade relations with the British West India Islands, with a view to ultimate political connection; (3) an income franchise; (4) the ballot, with the addition of compulsory voting; (5) a scheme for the representation of minorities; (6) encouragement of immigration and free homesteads in the public domain; (7) the imposition of duties for revenue so adjusted as to afford every possible encouragement to native industry; (8) an improved militia system under command of trained Dominion officers; (9) no property qualifications in members of the House of Commons; (10) reorganization of the Senate; (11) pure and economic administration of public affairs.

It is interesting, and perhaps not unprofitable, to compare this platform with the programme announced in 1872 by a body of Quebec *Rouges*. The *Rouge* platform also contained eleven planks, and while more radical in its minor features, shows less breadth and less faith than that of the National Association of Ontario. The *Rouges* demanded: (1) Election of Senators by the people or by the Local Legislatures; (2) reform of the electoral laws; (3) reduction of the number of ministers; (4) diminution of the Governor-General's salary; (5) reduction of the number of public employees;

(6) reorganization of the militia by taking for basis the maintenance of internal order; (7) amelioration of the means of communication so as to induce the commerce of the West to take the way of the St. Lawrence; (8) postponement of the construction of the Pacific railway until the North-West was sufficiently colonized; (9) the absolute right of regulating our own commercial relations with other countries in such a way as to insure the establishment of manufactures in Canada; (10) development of the resources of each of the provinces composing the Confederation; (11) protection to home industry. It was once attempted in the House of Commons to bind Mr. Laurier by this programme of 1872. But he declared that it had never received his sanction, and that he could not adopt some of its provisions.

There probably was more complete sympathy between the Canada First party and the Quebec *Rouges* than the platform of the National Association would suggest. While the platform spoke for British connection and consolidation of the Empire, some of its influential spokesmen undoubtedly looked to ultimate political separation, and to the independence of Canada. Denison and Foster made the platform, but Goldwin Smith and Howland had small reverence for either the letter or the spirit of its provisions. Its growing toleration for independence, and Mr. Goldwin Smith's active identification with its propaganda, explain *The*

Globe's uncompromising opposition to the movement. Doubtless *The Globe* was also concerned to maintain its own authority and to avert disruption of the Reform party, while Mr. Goldwin Smith was impatient of authority, and most of all of the authority of George Brown, careless of the disruption of parties, and a willing patron of political and intellectual revolt. Mr. Goldwin Smith in England belonged to that school of publicists which desired to set the colonies adrift. Here he consorted with the Canada First group, but rejected the policy of Imperial Federation. As he said himself, at a National Club dinner in 1874, he could club with Imperial Confederationists, but could not agree with them in opinion. He stated his attitude clearly in a letter which he addressed to *The Globe* on November 5th, 1874. He there explained that he looked to gradual emancipation as the natural end of the colonial system. "Gradual emancipation," he said, "means nothing more than the gradual concession by the mother country to the colonies of powers of self-government. This process has already been carried far. Should it be carried further, and ultimately consummated, as I frankly avow my belief it must, the mode of proceeding will be the same that it has always been. Each step will be an act of Parliament passed with the assent of the Crown. As to the filial tie between Canada and England, I hope it will endure forever." These views were undoubtedly held by other adherents of

the Canada First movement, notwithstanding the platform declaration for consolidation of the Empire, and hence *The Globe's* denunciation of the party as a nursery of independence sentiment, and a camping ground for annexationists. The Imperialists, however, were the dominant factor when they chose to show their strength, and their zeal far outlasted that of the less aggressive and less outspoken wing of Independents.

Among the names most dearly cherished by the Canada First party was that of Thomas D'Arcy McGee, while its best hopes for the future were centred in Edward Blake.[1] Perhaps the fear that Mr. Blake's sympathies would be alienated from the Liberal party through association with the new propaganda gave a still keener edge to *The Globe's* hostility to the movement. There was ground for its apprehension, and reason for the high hopes of Canada First. Mr. Blake's celebrated speech at Aurora, on October 3rd, 1874, is substantially a presentation and elaboration of the platform of the Canadian National Association. He there spoke for federation of the Empire, for reorganization of the Senate, for compulsory voting, for extension of the franchise, and for representation of minorities. He said it was impossible to foster a national spirit unless we had national interests to attend to, or among people who did not choose to undertake the

[1] See Mr. Goldwin Smith's introduction to the Foster Memorial Volume.

responsibilities, and to devote themselves to the duties to which national attributes belong. He described the Canadian people as "four millions of Britons who are not free," argued that by the policy of England in which we had no voice or control, Canada might be plunged into the horrors of war, and pointed out that without our knowledge or consent the navigation of the St. Lawrence had just been ceded forever to the United States. He believed, therefore, that an effort should be made to reorganize the Empire upon a federal basis, and that the people of Canada should have some greater share of control in the management of its foreign affairs.[1]

This speech was not well received by the chief journals of either of the great political parties. *The Globe* saw in the speech a platform which was not yet within the field of practical politics, and which menaced the cohesion and stability of the Liberal

[1] In a speech at a Reform banquet in Montreal in January, 1873, Mr. Blake said: "He believed that the discussions upon the Washington Treaty, and the feeling with respect to it both here and in the mother country, in reference to the general colonial question, would tend—and perhaps in that case good might come out of evil—to some solution calculated to perpetuate what we all desired—the intimate union of the British Empire. He did not believe that Canada would be long prepared to have her interests disposed of without her having a voice in the disposal of them. And he did not believe that she was prepared to say that the mode in which she was to acquire that voice was by a disruption of the Empire. We looked to a brighter future—to the reorganization of the Empire on another basis, which would open to us a wider and higher destiny as a member of the great British Empire."

party. *The Mail* and other Conservative journals exploited the speech to aggravate and exaggerate differences within the Reform party, and to make an open quarrel between Mr. Blake and Mr. Brown.

In this they did not quite succeed, but if at any time the relations between Brown and Blake were not satisfactory, it was during this period. *The Nation*, a weekly journal, to which W. A. Foster, Charles Lindsey, W. J. Rattray and Goldwin Smith, a corps of keen and practised writers, contributed, hailed Mr. Blake as the evangel of a new political gospel, and a few months later, the Camerons, of the London *Advertiser*, established at Toronto a new daily journal under the name of *The Liberal*, which during its short and brilliant career of five months was in intimate touch with Mr. Blake, Mr. Thomas Moss, and Mr. David Mills, at steady enmity with *The Globe*, and under direct inspiration of the advocates of the Aurora platform. But the brilliant dawn was soon cast in shadow, and leader and organ quickly fell away. In May, 1875, Mr. Blake re-entered the Mackenzie Government, *The Liberal* was suspended, and the National Association ceased to be an active, or at least an organized factor in the public life of the country. Mr. Blake has recanted his pronouncement for federation of the Empire. Mr. Goldwin Smith is in strange company when he consorts with his political associates of a quarter of a century ago. Foster, of fragrant memory, sleeps while his work goes on, and

his message voices with distincter utterance the common faith of the Canadian people. The National Club lives and thrives, loyal to the Imperial sympathies, and devoted to the Imperial aspirations of its founders, and a strong citadel of Canadian national sentiment. Colonel Denison, too, unchanged and unchangeable, carrying a green youth into a serene age, treading the way of his loyalist forefathers, proclaiming a united Canada and a united Empire, aggressive, independent and public-spirited, has never ceased in the work to which he dedicated himself so many years ago, and though he has not sat in the councils of the State, nor worn the decorations which have fallen to men of less desert and smaller service, has yet greatly fashioned the ideals of the Canadian people, and powerfully influenced the course of public policy in British America. The dying struggles of Canada First were the birth-pangs of the National Policy.

CHAPTER IX

IN THE MACKENZIE ADMINISTRATION

THE year 1876 witnessed the definite adoption of protection as the fiscal policy of the Conservative party. The idea came with an alluring name, and under circumstances signally favourable to its rapid growth and ready acceptance by the masses of the people. The country lay under the heavy hand of commercial depression. Wages were low, factories idle, mercantile houses trembling on the verge of collapse, the farmers' profits reduced by stagnant markets at home and low prices abroad. In the United States, as in Great Britain, conditions were at least as bad as in Canada. A stream of surplus goods poured across the border and choked the natural markets of Canadian manufacturers. In four years the total volume of trade fell from $217,000,000 to $172,000,000. The annual deficit in the national finances ranged from $1,000,000 to $2,000,000. This was an inviting situation for politicians out of office, and a positive elysium for commercial theorists and political agents of industrial panaceas. Bad times greatly increase popular faith in the efficacy of Acts of Parliament, and incline even conservative communities to revolutionary political experiments.

There seems to be quite conclusive evidence that Sir John Macdonald was not a protectionist. Mr. W. F. Maclean, M.P., in a spirited and illuminative sketch of the Conservative leader, has said that he was "timid unto death of protection," that he "had to be bullied into it, led into it, committed to it by others," and that "when he thought it grown, he used it as a bridge to reach the power he liked to wield."[1] Mr. Maclean had close relations with some of the chief writers of the protectionist campaign, and may be assumed to speak with knowledge. The late Nicholas Flood Davin, in one of the last letters he wrote from the Press Gallery of the House of Commons, quoted words of protest used by Sir John Macdonald against an article in *The Mail* which seemed to commit the Conservative party to the policy of protection. Similar evidence has been furnished by Mr. Goldwin Smith, who during these years was on terms of personal and political intimacy with the Conservative leader. Mr. Goldwin Smith has said that shortly before the election of 1878, he called Sir John Macdonald's attention to the fact that some of his supporters were holding protectionist language, and ventured to point out that, while the United States with its vast and varied area of production, and its immense home market, might not suffer so much from the system, protection would never do for Canada. "No," was Sir John Macdonald's reply,

[1] *Canadian Magazine*, January, 1895.

"and you need not fear that I am going to get into that hole." When he ultimately adopted protection, Mr. Goldwin Smith rallied him on his conversion, and his answer was that "protection had done so much for him that he had to do something for protection."[1] There has been an attempt to show that Sir John Macdonald was a protectionist as far back as 1859, when the Galt tariff, against which British manufacturers and the Imperial Government protested, was adopted. But that was a tariff of 15 per cent., according to Galt's own estimate of 13½ per cent., and we know that in 1874, when the duties were raised from 15 to 17½ per cent. by the Mackenzie Government, the increase was attacked by the Conservative Opposition in Parliament as the thin edge of the wedge of protection. In fact, it is well understood that the course of events drove on the Conservative leader to its advocacy, and that political, rather than economic considerations were the determining factor in his conversion.[2]

Up to this time there were protectionists in both

[1] Letter to the Toronto *Globe,* September 23rd, 1895.

[2] Mr. D'Alton McCarthy, in a speech at St. Mary's, on October 22nd, 1893, said: "No doubt in the world that we were out of power, and by going in for the N. P., and taking the wind out of Mr. Mackenzie's sails we got into power. We became identified with the protection policy, and if Mr. Mackenzie had adopted the protective policy we should have been free traders. I am willing to make this confession: if Mr. Mackenzie had been a protectionist there would have been nothing left for us but to be free traders."

political parties, and the movement to which Sir John Macdonald finally adhered, was of commercial rather than of party origin. Many influential Liberals were among the group of manufacturers who forced the issue into Canadian politics, and for a time it was by no means certain that the Government would not recognize the growing force of protectionist opinion and propose a substantial increase in customs duties. In fact, as was said elsewhere, the Government had determined to raise the general scale of duties from $17\frac{1}{2}$ to 20 per cent. but yielded to the representations of Maritime Liberals that such increase would be fatal to ministerial candidates in the Eastern Provinces. There seemed every reason to believe that free trade sentiment was deeply rooted in the eastern communities, and it will be remembered that one of the favourite arguments of opponents of Confederation was that the creation of federal institutions and the necessity of great public works for the purposes of interprovincial trade and general national intercourse, would require a heavy increase of customs taxation in order to provide the large revenues necessary to meet the demands upon the federal treasury. These prophecies seemed now to be in process of fulfilment, and ministers from the Atlantic Provinces offered a determined resistance to any increase in the scale of duties. It is interesting in this connection to remember that at the general election which followed, nearly two thirds of the Mari-

time constituencies were carried by the candidates of Sir John Macdonald.[1]

Many of Mr. Mackenzie's supporters from Ontario and Quebec knew the feeling of the people and foresaw disaster to the Liberal party as a consequence of the Government's immovable adherence to low tariff. But they were in a minority in the ministerial caucus, or at least were overborne by the eastern contingent, and reluctantly surrendered the advantage of position to the Conservative leaders. As between a tariff of $17\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. and duties of 20 per cent., or even of $22\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., no serious question of principle was involved. It could be fairly argued that the necessities of revenue demanded an increase of customs taxation. A moderate increase of customs duties would probably have conciliated public opinion and prolonged the existence of an exceptionally economical and efficient Administration. If it be held that there is some peculiar and particular sanctity in a tariff of $17\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., then it was well to adhere to the position and stake the fate of the Government on a scale of duties insufficient to meet the ordinary demands upon the revenue, and inadequate to provide for the public works and public services which a growing country demanded. The object of a revenue tariff is to provide revenue, and incidental

[1] The protectionists carried fourteen out of the twenty-one seats in Nova Scotia, five out of the six seats in Prince Edward Island, and five out of the seventeen seats in New Brunswick.

protection is necessarily involved. The object of a protective tariff is to afford protection to home products and native industries, with revenue as the secondary consideration. It is just as rational to argue that a protective tariff may not fall below 50 per cent. as to contend that a revenue tariff may not rise above 17½ per cent. The protectionist campaign, however, derived much of its force from the formidable influx of American manufactures, the destructive effects of this competition upon Canadian industries, and the undoubted fact that owing to the bad conditions of trade in the United States, the surplus goods of American factories were sold in the Canadian market at sacrifice prices.

It is, perhaps, surprising that a serious movement for protection did not arise sooner in Canada. We shall probably find the reason in the reluctance of Canada to increase the taxation on British imports, and in the abiding hope of a renewal of reciprocal trade relations with the adjoining country. If the United States had not abrogated the Reciprocity Treaty of 1854, Canada would hardly have adopted the system of protection. If Congress had ratified the treaty negotiated by Sir Edward Thornton and the Hon. George Brown in 1874, the election of 1878 would probably have turned upon other issues. But the statesmen at Washington were manifestly determined to maintain a policy which bore heavily upon Canada, and in the bitter season of depression through which the country was

passing, Sir John Macdonald's demand for reciprocity of trade or reciprocity of tariffs exactly gauged the temper of the Canadian people. It was vain, of course, to think that Canada could coerce the United States, but an increase of duties against the Republic seemed at least an assertion of fiscal independence, and a manifestation of Canadian spirit in the face of an aggressive and powerful trade rival. The argument may not sound well to students of economics, but it touched the sentiment and the prejudices of the people, and was deftly and assiduously advanced by the Conservative leaders and the organized protectionists.

National resentment and industrial depression constitute a formidable political partnership. The very term which the Conservative party adopted as the synonym for protection, seemed to suggest that the prevailing commercial distress was due to some lack of national spirit in the Administration. Mr. Laurier was not much deceived as to the temper of the country, although he was not convinced that an increase in duties was necessary, and was frankly hostile to any such system of extreme protection as was illustrated by the policy of the United States. He spoke in the House on March 10th, 1876, on a motion by Sir John Macdonald demanding such a readjustment of the tariff as would aid in alleviating the stagnation of business, and "afford fitting encouragement and protection to the struggling manufactures and industries as well as to the

agricultural products of the country." In this speech Mr. Laurier said he would not deny that he had been "a moderate protectionist." He would not, however, admit that the question was one of Free Trade versus Protection. It was not a fact that free trade was a Liberal principle and protection a Conservative principle. It was purely and strictly a question of social economy. He pointed out that while in Great Britain free trade was carried through political action, and was opposed by the Conservative leaders, still when the new commercial policy was put into operation, and its beneficent results experienced, the Conservative party forsook its old prejudices and became like the Liberals a unit for the free trade system. In France the Liberal party was divided on the question. Thiers was a protectionist, and Gambetta and Say were free traders. He would not undertake to define the position of the Conservatives of France. He had the notion that, like the great body of the Conservatives of Lower Canada, "they chiefly concerned themselves about saving their own souls and cursing the souls of other people." In the United States the Conservative or Democratic party stood for free trade, while the Republican or Liberal party was intensely protectionist. In Canada the Liberal party was by no means a unit for free trade, and he had only just discovered that the Conservatives had a policy on the question. He proceeded: "If the view of the subject that free

trade must be the ultimate policy of any nation be taken, it yet cannot be denied that protection is a matter of necessity for a young nation in order that it may attain the full development of its own resources." He thought that free trade or protection must be applied according to the necessities of a country. "The most obstinate Conservative must admit that freedom is the natural condition of trade, and the most obstinate Liberal must also allow that, though it would never do to build a Chinese wall around the country in order to cut us off from the outside world, yet sometimes it is both wise and prudent to establish on our frontiers a few detached forts to protect our territory against foreign invasion."

He said further, that if he were in Great Britain he would avow free trade, but as a Canadian, born and resident in the country, he had to conclude that we required a measure of protection. He went on to argue that protection meant taxation, and was the price a young and vigorous nation must pay for its development. He was, however, opposed to any increase in the existing tariff, and would not admit that the economic policy of the country was responsible for the depression which prevailed. The $17\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. tariff gave the Canadian manufacturer protection against foreign competition. Besides, against the English manufacturer he had the difference in freights in his favour, and against the American competitor he had the difference in the

price of labour.[1] "The depression," he said "is not particular to this country, but is universal, and affects highly protected as well as free trade countries." In the United States they had a high tariff, but were suffering even worse than we in Canada, and the remedy there proposed was a decrease in duties. It would be unwise to legislate to meet exceptional circumstances, and the fact that the country, under normal conditions, was satisfied with a moderate tariff was evidence that that was a satisfactory and beneficial policy. At any rate, he would not vote to declare that every article of consumption in the Dominion should be taxed.[2]

Mr. Laurier made no other important speech during the session of 1876. In fact, outside this contribution to the tariff debate, his name scarcely appears in Hansard. In the session of 1877 he was more active, and again his most important speech was devoted to tariff issues. It is in the main a restatement of the position he took in the previous session, supported by fresh illustrations, and buttressed with new arguments. It was in this speech that he described Papineau as a protectionist, not

[1] "A fifteen per cent. tariff means more than fifteen per cent. protection to manufacturers. There is the cost of transport of goods from the other side of the water, which amounts, on an average, to at least five per cent., so that there is now a protection equal to twenty per cent. That ought to be sufficient for any industry suited to the country; and, as to others, it would be unwise to attempt to sustain them by fiscal props."—Mr. Thomas White, before the Dominion Board of Trade in 1873.

[2] Hansard, 1876, pages 589, 592.

so much on grounds of political economy as from political reasons. He reminded his opponents who charged the French Liberals with inconsistency, that in the time of Papineau they were struggling for responsible government and a larger measure of political liberty. But they had received "most ample justice, and the most complete liberty, and the result was that in all this vast empire there were no people more attached to British institutions than French-Canadians." As a young man Mr. Laurier was manifestly impressed by the economic rather than by the separatist notions of Papineau, and in this speech he practically reaffirmed his conviction of the wisdom of a policy of moderate protection for Canada. There were some industries, he argued, which could not be established without the aid of legislative action. He was quite frank and straightforward. "I say this openly and in the face of my own political friends," is the language of Hansard. He was still convinced, however, that a tariff of $17\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. gave sufficient advantage to home manufactures, that excessive protection would be bad for the consumer and ultimately bad for the industries, and that no good result could accrue from a policy of retaliation against the United States.[1]

The freedom with which Mr. Laurier had discussed some disturbing questions in the Quebec Legislature subjected him to frequent attack by the

[1] Hansard, March 22nd, 1877, pages 920, 924.

Conservative press of his province, and was not overlooked by his opponents in the House of Commons. For example, during the tariff debate of this session, Mr. A. P. Caron charged Mr. Laurier with saying that the French-Canadians were inferior to other races so far as commerce and manufactures were concerned. The only foundation for the statement was that Mr. Laurier had attacked the educational system of the province, and he now told Mr. Caron that if he were still in the Legislature he would continue the agitation for educational reform.[1] He made a characteristic observation during a discussion as to whether or not prayers in the House should be read in both French and English. Mr. Hector L. Langevin had said he was not willing that French members should waive their rights, and would insist that the prayers should be read in French. Mr. Laurier observed that "no rights were involved in the question. It was simply a matter of reverence and decorum. The Divinity could be invoked as well in the English language as in the French."[2]

Towards the end of this session he had a somewhat ungracious task to perform. He learned that the firm with which Mr. J. M. Currier, member for Ottawa, was connected, had had contracts to supply lumber to the St. Vincent de Paul Penitentiary and to the Public Works Department,

[1] Hansard, 1877, page 952.

[2] Hansard, 1877, page 94.

and having profited by the contracts, had thus violated the Act for the Preservation of the Independence of Parliament. It does not seem that any particular guilt attached to Mr. Currier. He was not an active partner in the firm which had the contracts, and recognizing at once the impropriety of the position he resigned his seat in Parliament. Mr. Laurier made the charges with admirable moderation, and while showing necessary firmness, acquitted Mr. Currier of deliberate wrong-doing, and gave a manly tone and a large spirit to the whole incident.[1] But Liberals were facing the enforced resignation of Mr. James Norris, of Lincoln, and of the Hon. T. W. Anglin, of Gloucester, N.B., Speaker of the House, for just such an unconscious impropriety as was now brought home to the Conservative member for Ottawa, and they possibly found consolation and compensation in Mr. Currier's experience.

In caucus and in general association with his parliamentary colleagues, Mr. Laurier grew steadily in influence and in popularity. He kept his ambition well in hand, eschewed all self-advertising, avoided the fatal fault of much speaking, and exhibited under all circumstances a simple dignity and an excellent discretion. No man could have done less to impose himself upon the country, or to secure the recognition of the political leaders with whom he acted. He refused to lobby for personal preferment, and he would have held very cheaply any

[1] Hansard, 1877, pages 1482 and 1515.

honour which came as the result of solicitation or of intrigue. He simply revealed himself at his best in Parliament and in the councils of his party, and was content to make no self-valuation of his claims, and send out no advertisement of his ambitions. But almost from the moment that he set foot in the House of Commons it was recognized that he was the natural leader of the Liberals of Quebec, and that sound party policy would require his early admission to the Cabinet. Two years before he joined the Ministry, the Hon. George Brown had counselled Mr. Mackenzie to advance to Cabinet rank "the young, vigorous, popular and eloquent man of the present moment." Mr. Brown said: "A new fresh man is more in harmony with the spirit of your Government than any other. His elevation would be hailed by all his young compatriots, and he has no antecedents to fetter his action. Of course, I speak entirely from what I have heard from you and others as to Laurier, for I have not the advantage of knowing him personally."[1]

It was equally apparent to the Opposition that Mr. Laurier must soon take office. Now and then a gibe to that effect was thrown across the floor of the Chamber. They saw, in the phrase of Mr. Caron, that "his seat was gradually approaching the treasury benches." The opportunity for his admission to the Cabinet came in the autumn of 1877, when Mr. Cauchon was appointed Lieu-

[1] Buckingham-Ross, "Life of Alexander Mackenzie," page 440.

tenant-Governor of Manitoba, in succession to the Hon. Alex. Morris. Mr. Cauchon brought no strength to the Liberal Administration, and the reasons which led Mr. Mackenzie to include him in the Cabinet have never been well understood. He was a man of amiable character and of genial personal qualities, but as a provincial Minister he had trafficked in public contracts for direct personal gain; and when one recalls the chief issue on which Mr. Mackenzie carried the country, it is strange that he should have coalesced with this discredited politician. If it was hoped that, as a recreant Conservative, Cauchon would divide the Conservatives of Quebec and bring fresh support to the Administration, the expectation was not realized, while the elevation of a convicted mercenary to the authority of leadership over the Liberals of Quebec was resented by the best element of the old *Rouge* party. Cauchon was attacked with exceptional vigour and persistency by the organs and speakers of the Opposition throughout the whole term of his connection with the Ministry, and their indignation was not even quieted when he accepted the Lieutenant-Governorship. There is no doubt that their relentless pursuit of their old ally had some effect on public opinion, and many Liberals rejoiced when he withdrew from the Government. It may be that much of this indignation was simulated. Never was a Government more bitterly and more unsparingly denounced than that of Mr. Mackenzie, and never,

perhaps, have we had a set of Ministers in Canada who less deserved the merciless treatment they received at the hands of their political opponents. But the vulnerability of Cauchon prejudiced the whole Administration, and greatly impaired its power to resist the meaner and more extravagant charges of its opponents.

Mr. Laurier succeeded Mr. Cauchon in the Government, and was assigned the portfolio of Inland Revenue. His appointment took effect on October 8th, but the press announcements had anticipated the event. The Toronto *Globe* of October 6th had a sympathetic and favourable estimate of the new Minister. "Mr. Laurier," said the writer, "will prove a decided accession to the Ministry, and his presence in the Cabinet will be welcomed by all the English-speaking Reformers, as well as by the Liberals amongst his own compatriots. His influence among the latter has long been admitted, and the former have come to recognize him as one of the rising members of the party to which he belongs. Whatever differences may once have existed between the Reformers of Ontario and those of Quebec, no trace of them is to be found in the utterances of Mr. Laurier. This harmony, which in his case is perfect, exists also, we believe, between those who act with him and their fellow Liberals of the West, and, therefore, it was eminently appropriate that as a representative member of his party he should be invited to

assume a position which he is otherwise well-qualified to fill. He is an elegant speaker and ready debater, he has shown that he is possessed of that capacity to master details which is so essential to a successful administrator, and he is unquestionably endowed with what is of equal importance in a statesman, breadth of view and a thorough mastery of political principles." The article went on to say that Mr. Laurier was very popular in his own locality, and that if opposed at all he would be re-elected by a large majority.

The Toronto *Mail* of October 9th dealt with Mr. Laurier's elevation to the Cabinet, and indicated that he would be strongly opposed in his constituency. Its references to the Government were bitter and intemperate; its references to the new Minister not ungenerous. "Personally," *The Mail* said, "Mr. Laurier has so far made but few enemies. His *début* in the House of Commons as a speaker was a success. He has earned a reputation as a graceful and accomplished orator." It quite fairly added: "Should he fail as an administrator he will not be the first good speaker who has had no aptitude for the work of a department." "We simply say," *The Mail* continued, "that in those qualities which particularly make a man strong in Parliament he has yet to give proof of his strength." This was all fair enough, and there was too good reason for the apprehension which the next sentence expressed. "We shall be glad to learn that his somewhat delicate health will

not be a bar to his usefulness as a member of the Government." Finally, *The Mail* said: "We have no wish to see him out of Parliament, but we shall rejoice to see the county which he represents repudiate his entrance into the present corrupt and impotent Administration." The general tone of press comment, outside of the fanatical *Bleu* organs of Quebec, was considerate and generous, and it is nothing short of remarkable that in so few years of public life he should have won this far-reaching admiration for his character and far-reaching respect for his opinions. *The Globe* was led to express satisfaction that "Conservative orators and organs have at last found an opponent of whom, on personal grounds, they can speak no evil." It declared that "in Ontario and the Maritime Provinces, no less than in Quebec, his advent to office has been hailed as an event of no common significance, and his character has been apparently gauged at one and the same time by the people of all the provinces with one pleasing and satisfactory result." "Such a man," *The Globe* said, "would be listened to, not as a sentimentalist, nor a bigot, nor a partisan, but as a statesman. There can be no question as to the advantage of having such a representative of Quebec thought, feelings, and opinion in the Cabinet."

Very different was the tone of *La Minerve*. The French Conservative organ said that people were expecting too much of Mr. Laurier not to be disappointed. He could not maintain himself at the

height to which he was being exalted.—"Mr. Laurier's past does not warrant these exaggerated eulogies. It is not because a member of Parliament has made a very pretty academic speech that we must crown him as a great man. His friends are rendering him a bad service. They are making a pedestal for him which is too exalted. Mr. Laurier has up to the present time distinguished himself only by his speeches, and they contained only phrases more or less well constructed, but not a new idea. Now, one does not save a party with speeches or phrases. Mr. Laurier may have the material in him of a statesman, but his talent has not yet manifested itself. Up to the present time this talent has appeared to us superficial. He has never shown any depth." It is interesting to contrast with this judgment of the leading French Conservative journal the utterance of the Montreal *Gazette*, then edited by Mr. Thomas White, and perhaps the most sober and sagacious of Conservative journals in Canada. *The Gazette* said: "Against Mr. Laurier personally we have nothing to say, and it is a pleasure, after having to deal with such men as Laflamme, and Huntington, and Cauchon, to realize that in the case of the new Minister the objection becomes wholly political. But as a public man he is, under the Constitution, bound to admit that the question before his constituents is not whether he is 'a good fellow' or not, but whether the policy of the Government for which, seeing that no change is

announced, he has assumed the entire responsibility, as much so as if he had been a member all the time, is such as deserves the support and confidence of the people."

Le National said: "After a stay of a year in Montreal, Mr. Laurier established himself in the county town of the county of Arthabaska. From that day his future was assured. Clients arrived as by enchantment, and he became the pet child of the people. His entrance into Parliament was only a question of time and opportunity. As a speaker, and as a scientific man, Mr. Laurier has attained a very high position in the federal Parliament. We admire his great facility of elocution, the elegance of his language, and the serious tone that he gives to discussion. These qualities have placed him side by side with Mr. Blake and Sir John Macdonald." *L'Union*, of St. Hyacinthe, with equal heartiness, said: "Mr. Laurier, the brilliant member for Arthabaska, is chosen to replace Mr. Cauchon in Mr. Mackenzie's Cabinet. The eulogies that the English papers and some Conservative papers have passed upon the new Minister, clearly demonstrate that he will be a respected and influential chief. His conduct as a Minister will be firm and liberal. The speeches that he has lately made indicate the course that he intends to follow. We are convinced that the true friends of the country will make haste to second with their efforts the one that the English have called the 'coming or rising man'!"

All these various opinions and estimates are taken from journals more or less closely identified with one or other of the political parties. It is plain that the Liberal press had a great regard for the young Minister, while the considerate and even generous treatment he received from many of the Conservative journals is almost without parallel in the history of political controversy in Canada. The independent press was equally appreciative and eulogistic. For example, the writer of "Current Events" in the *Canadian Monthly*, said: "The new Minister of Inland Revenue, the Hon. Wilfrid Laurier, is in every way a valuable accession to the Cabinet. A young man, not yet 36 years of age, he has an amount of ability, coupled with a maturity of judgment, which marks him out as a leader of party. The address which he delivered last June before *Le Club Canadien* in Quebec has now acquired new significance; it is no longer the able utterance of a promising legislator, but must serve as the manifesto of the Quebec Liberals—the best expression of their matured opinions." The writer added: "Mr. Laurier, in his Quebec address, made light of the charge of inconsistency, and he was right in doing so. It is the parrot cry of those who are too obtuse to learn anything by experience, or too crass and stubborn to profit by it. The Liberal party of Quebec is distinctly national in its principles and aims, and it is, therefore, a great gain to the Administration to have secured the services of its young

leader, from whose unquestionable force and vigour of mind, not less than from his oratorical power, Canada, and especially his compatriots of Quebec, have a right to expect great things in the future."[1]

Just as soon as he was sworn into the Cabinet, Mr. Laurier set out for Drummond and Arthabaska to enter upon the election campaign made necessary by his acceptance of office. The hope that he would be returned by acclamation was quickly dispelled. The Opposition made immediate preparations for a strenuous contest, proceeded to throw into the constituency workers and speakers from all over Quebec, and even drafted for service in this remote field a corps of their most active canvassing and organizing agents from the Province of Ontario. Mr. Laurier was left to fight the platform battle almost single-handed against a score of the best outside speakers the Conservative party could command, while his organization was by no means equal to that of his opponents. It was thought that his personal popularity would prevail against all odds, and that pride in his character and career, and satisfaction with his appointment to office would be more than a match for dull times and all the devices and efforts of his opponents. The Minister reached Arthabaskaville on October 9th, and was greeted with extraordinary demonstrations of esteem and good-will. Over two hundred carriages were in procession, the streets were decorated with

[1] *Canadian Monthly* for November, 1877.

arches, and the trees hung with flags and bunting. In the presence of such enthusiasm, the defeat of the Minister seemed quite out of the question. But his opponents were not daunted. They redoubled their efforts to accomplish his overthrow, and showed astonishing resource and vigour in the prosecution of the campaign. In the private canvass, Mr. Laurier was subjected to a remarkable series of accusations and misrepresentations, while the platform attack was levelled against the Administration. It was sought to minimize the popularity of the Minister by fierce and vehement denunciation of the Government which he had entered. As it was put by the chief Conservative journal: "It is the Government, not Mr. Laurier, which is on trial in Drummond and Arthabaska, though, of course, you cannot prevent the Government receiving in a measure the advantage of whatever popularity Mr. Laurier may have in the constituency. It is because he has dared to take upon his shoulders the sins of the Administration, even to Mr. Mackenzie's coalition with Mr. Cauchon, and the latter's elevation to a Lieutenant-Governorship, that he finds such strong opposition to him on his return to his old constituency."

The main issue on the platform was the condition of the country; the main issue in the canvass the relations of Mr. Laurier and his party with the Roman Catholic ecclesiastics. For many years the Church authorities had given no quarter to Liberal

candidates, and had almost strangled the Liberal party in Quebec. Occasion will be taken in another chapter to consider this issue, and to present Mr. Laurier's attitude in face of the bold and determined attempt of the bishops to destroy political liberalism and civil liberty in Lower Canada. In this particular contest, however, it was the emissaries of the Conservative party, rather than the agents of the bishops, who undertook to establish that Mr. Laurier was a bad Catholic, and that he and his party were under the direct censure of Rome. It was represented in the French parishes that Mr. Laurier had become a Protestant minister.[1] It was said he had demanded that priests should marry. It was declared in one of the campaign documents circulated by his opponents that he was the companion of "apostates of the Chiniquy breed," of "excommunicated persons," and of "friends of Guibord." He was denounced by at least one priest as a Liberal of the worst and most dangerous character, while a second curé sent out a letter for general distribution declaring that Mr. Bourbeau, the Minister's opponent, was "devoted to the interests of religion and had shown great patriotism on many occasions." Another campaign document undertook to interpret a pas-

[1] He had been represented as a Protestant minister; there was not one of the canvassers of the honourable gentlemen opposite that did not represent to the people that he was not a Minister of the Crown, but that he was a Protestant minister.—Mr. Laurier in the House of Commons, February 11th, 1878.

toral letter which had just been issued at the instance of the authorities at Rome and in response to the appeal of Liberal Catholics, as meaning the reverse of what its language implied. The effect of this pastoral letter was to declare that no pontifical decree existed condemning any political party, and therefore, to set Catholics free to vote for Liberal candidates. But the clerical campaign document had more specific knowledge of the mind of Rome, and the judgment of the hierarchy. It said: "This does not mean that the Liberal party is not condemned because of its bad doctrines, or does not deserve to be condemned. It merely shows that the Church in its wisdom and prudence does not wish to point out by name any person, class, or party." But "this party, or at least the leaders, are certainly under the weight of the clauses condemning Liberalism." These men, it was further claimed, were "Liberals of the worst kind," and Mr. Laurier and Mr. Laflamme were specifically named as standing under the direct censure of the Church. It was also charged against Mr. Laurier, as he said in a speech in the House during the next session, that when a youth of twenty he had joined an association whose members were sworn to "crush out the English race from the American continent."[1] The Irish Catholics of the constituency were told that he had become an Orangeman, and the French-speaking electors that he was a Presbyterian. Altogether

[1] Hansard, 1878, page 56.

it was a remarkably resourceful campaign on the part of the Minister's opponents, and the result proved that it was as effective as it was remarkable. When the polls closed on October 27th, he was found to be in a minority of 29, where he had had a majority of 238 at the general election. The result was received by the Conservative press and party with a roar of exultation, while the Liberal party felt the blow from one end of the country to the other, and looked with gloom and apprehension to the future.

It was a bad defeat for the Administration, and a bad defeat for the Minister. It was probably the sorest blow that has been dealt to Mr. Laurier during all his public career, and he did not disguise the fact that he was hit hard and that he understood the full significance of the incident. He was beaten in his own home, beaten just as he had accepted office, and beaten by the men of his own race and faith; and in all three facts he found cause for unaffected regret and disappointment. It is said that old Liberals in Drummond and Arthabaska, who were so confident of his election that they did not even go to the polls, wept when they learned the result. In the English portions of the constituency he ran very strong and gained heavily on the vote he had polled three years before. As *The Mail* said, "The English vote went heavily for the new Minister." The causes of his defeat were actively canvassed by the press of the country, but in the main their

judgments simply represented party opinion. The Liberal journals of Montreal, French and English, ascribed the result to the active intervention of the Quebec Government, and to the interference of the local clergy in defiance of the pastoral of the bishops. The Montreal *Star* argued that the Conservative victory was due to the determination of the people to pass censure upon Mr. Mackenzie for taking Mr. Cauchon into his Cabinet. The Ottawa correspondent of *The Mail* wrote: "No stronger man than Mr. Laurier in the Province of Quebec could be found to contest the constituency. It was a Grit stronghold. Mr. Laurier in a short time has made a brilliant record. He had ingratiated himself into the affections of the English-speaking party, and secured at least two hundred Conservative votes on this occasion; in fact, he appealed to the electors with everything in his favour, and has apparently been beaten, not because of his own, but rather the utter unpopularity of the Government of which in an evil hour he consented to become a member." The Montreal *Gazette* said: "No man ever appealed to a constituency personally better qualified than did the Minister of Inland Revenue. His personal respectability is admitted on all hands, and he certainly has no reason to complain that this has in any way been questioned. His ability is acknowledged by his opponents as well as by his friends. He had just assumed a position of quasi-leadership, inaugurating his acceptance of that

position by an address which was avowedly intended to mark out the policy of the Liberal party for the future." "It was not," said the *Gazette*, "Mr. Laurier, the polished gentleman and skilful debater, who was appealing to the constituency; it was the Minister of Inland Revenue in Mr. Mackenzie's Government."

There were the usual charges of bribery made against the agents of the Ministerial candidate. It was likewise alleged, that in the French districts, Mr. Bourbeau was represented to have the support of the Orangemen, and that Mr. Huntington's celebrated speech in the county of Argenteuil, inviting the English-speaking people of Quebec to unite with the Liberal party in order to overcome the effects of clerical coercion in behalf of the candidates of the Conservative party, was circulated among the English-speaking electors of the division in the interests of Mr. Laurier. There seems to have been small basis for any of these charges, and at any rate, in these particulars, the Liberals were hopelessly outclassed by their opponents. There was neither a free use of money by the Liberals, nor any organized appeal to race or creed considerations. On the other hand, there was some justification for *The Globe's* vigorous denunciation of the methods to which his opponents resorted. Two or three days after the election that paper said: "It is evident from the documents circulated in the interests of the opposition candidate,

no less than from the well-known characters of the men who supported Mr. Bourbeau, that the grand objection to Mr. Laurier, and the intense anxiety to defeat him, had their origin in that bigotry to which the very name of Liberalism acts as fuel to fire. It is a sentiment quite outside of and distinct from the faith these men profess; it has been repudiated and discountenanced by the authorities they are assumed most to respect; it would be fatal to the liberties of any people that acknowledged it." "Mr. Laurier," *The Globe* said, "dares in secular matters to exercise the simplest and most necessary rights of citizenship, he dares to be a Liberal in politics, to be a member of a Liberal Government, to insist on the right of free judgment; he maintains his views and opinions with distinguished ability; he is capable not only of following, but of leading in the Liberal army. These are the reasons why he must be beaten at all hazards; these are the motives that urge his assailants to strike him down." *The Globe* added: "Mr. Laurier might hold every opinion and stand by every word he has ever expressed, and there is not a Roman Catholic in Ontario who would not be proud to hail him as a worthy representative of his communion in the Canadian Parliament. Bigotry itself in Ontario dared not ostracize a man so able and so distinguished on any such grounds." These views *The Globe* repeated in subsequent articles, and it does not seem that the issue was ever

squarely met by the Conservative press, or that the evidence upon which *The Globe* spoke was ever seriously impugned. There is no doubt that for many years clerical coercion was freely employed against the candidates of the Liberal party in Quebec, and that during all that period the Conservative leaders had the support of the Protestant organizations of Ontario, and of a majority of the English-speaking people of the Lower Province. Moreover, it is doubtful if Mr. Laurier's attitude in Quebec brought any general support to the Liberal party, while such a paper as the St. John *Freeman*, Catholic and Liberal, took issue with *The Globe*, and intimated that its utterances were unwise and impolitic. Anger, grief, and disappointment all find expression in the Montreal *Herald's* comment on the Minister's defeat. *The Herald* said: "The electors of his late constituency will see the day, and that not in the distant future, when they will regret having rejected one of the most brilliant and promising men in the Dominion. Mr. Laurier's defeat is a blow to the Liberal party undoubtedly, and a blow at the cause of honesty, free thought, and political morality in Canada, but it would be absurd to suppose that the verdict of one electoral division, obtained upon false pretences, can inflict an injury that cannot be repaired. Mr. Laurier, if his services are spared to his country, will have a name in history, beside which those of his detractors will be as nothing, and in the future, when the

accident shall be repaired, he can afford to laugh at the stupidity which has been displayed by the majority of the electors of Drummond and Arthabaska."

The Government, of course, could not permit Mr. Laurier's defeat in Drummond and Arthabaska to interrupt his political career, nor to block his entrance into the Ministry. It was at once determined that he must be returned for some other constituency. Mr. Thibeaudeau offered to resign his seat for Quebec East in the young Minister's favour. Accordingly on November 7th an influential deputation from Quebec went to Arthabaskaville, and, in response to their representations, Mr. Laurier accepted nomination for the division. On the next day he went down to Quebec, and plunged at once into a contest in which he met from his opponents as keen and uncompromising opposition as he had encountered in Drummond and Arthabaska. The Toronto *Globe*, if it is permissible to quote from that paper just one or two additional sentences, in eulogy of Mr. Laurier and in protest against the very determined attempt of the Conservative leaders to keep him out of the Government, said: "Mr. Laurier's entrance into the Cabinet has direct political significance. He takes, with the assumption of office, a new and more influential position. He is sure to exercise that influence in the manner most distasteful and most fatal to his reactionary opponents. The substitution of broad, statesmanlike views

for local and sectarian rivalries and controversies, is of all things needed in Quebec at the present time, and it cannot fail to attract whatever is best, most enlightened, and most patriotic in such a community. So every nerve is being strained to defeat Mr. Laurier again, and thus, if possible, to disgust him with public life."

The old question of amnesty for the leaders in the Red River insurrection appeared in the contest. Two months before, on September 20th, the Government had passed an Order-in-Council which placed O'Donoghue on the same footing as Riel and Lepine, and this was approved by the Imperial authorities. The fact was announced during the election, and at once the cry was raised that the object was to influence the Irish Catholics of Quebec East to support Mr. Laurier. Possibly this idea was not wholly absent from the mind of the Government, and possibly Liberals had very generally concluded that O'Donoghue had figured long enough as a hero and martyr for Conservative politicians, and strictly for campaign purposes. Of course, the main issue raised against the Government in Quebec East, as in Drummond and Arthabaska, was the tariff, but as Mr. Laurier had the support of the large manufacturers of the division, the protectionist argument was less damaging than it would have proved in most industrial communities. He had the unanimous support of the English press of Quebec, as he had had the support of the decisive

majority of the English-speaking electors of Drummond and Arthabaska.

In a comment on some of his utterances the Quebec *Mercury* said: "Mr. Laurier's remarks were those of the statesman, as distinct from the mere politician, that is, the man of large combinations as distinct from the man of temporary expedients and cunning shifts." *The Mercury* also took occasion to say that if Mr. Laurier were defeated, "It would be a misfortune for the province, as it would show that there was no bridging over the animosities either of the present or of the past. It will, should it occur, show there is a gulf in our political forum which no personal devotion, however patriotic and self-abnegating, can fill. If Mr. Laurier, on the other hand, be elected, a new departure will result from it. The sickening or half-maddening iteration of threadbare rants and worn-out war-cries will give place to real and virile politics, worthy of national attention and enlightened thought." It is true that this was spoken in the heat of an election campaign; but it is the habit of election literature to emphasize the salient characteristics of its heroes, and the common recognition of Mr. Laurier as a man of unusual breadth of view, and of exceptional loftiness of character and nobility of purpose, could not be altogether the product of campaign hysterics and partisan imagination. Besides, as we have seen, if his opponents did not admit the justice of Liberal estimates, they did not

deny to Mr. Laurier the possession of admirable qualities.

It is vain, however, to expect that considerations of mercy or ideas of chivalry shall enter into an election contest, and in Quebec East, as in Drummond and Arthabaska, Mr. Laurier was fought as sternly and as unpityingly as if he had been the most paltry and sordid of professional politicians. He faced the battle with serene humour and high courage, and won a decisive victory. The polling took place on November 28th, and Mr. Laurier's majority over his Conservative opponent, Mr. Tourangeau, was 315. The news was received with rejoicing by Liberals throughout Canada, and with very special satisfaction by the Administration at Ottawa. In Quebec East a great torch-light procession celebrated the victory, and at other points in the province bonfires blazed and Liberal rejoicing found various and hearty manifestation. Prompt steps were taken to arrange for a public welcome to the Minister on his return to the capital. On December 1st he was accompanied to his home at Arthabaskaville by nearly two thousand of the citizens of the old French capital. They filled two trains. They were accompanied by two or three bands of music. The cars were gaily decorated with the *Rouge* colours. There were several stops by the way, at which the bands played and the Minister addressed the people. On December 4th he reached Montreal, where he was lunched by a representative

company of Liberals, and in the evening spoke to a great audience from the balcony of the St. Lawrence Hall. All these demonstrations were eclipsed, however, by the welcome he received on the following day at Ottawa. Notwithstanding heavy rain, he was met by a great crowd at the railway station, and presented with an address, to which he spoke in reply in both French and English. He was escorted to the home of the Prime Minister by a procession which embraced six hundred torch-bearers, four bands of music, and over one hundred carriages. His carriage was drawn by four white horses. He was enthusiastically cheered along the route of the parade, and again spoke to the people from the steps of Mr. Mackenzie's residence. Thus the Liberals strove to accentuate the victory in Quebec East, and to wipe out the memory of the defeat in Drummond and Arthabaska. It is noteworthy that throughout these two tumultuous campaigns Mr. Laurier spoke always with moderation and discretion, made no inflammatory appeal, and deliberately overlooked the intrusion into the contest of certain forces and agencies which angered and excited many of the Liberal journals. There is, perhaps, a trace of feeling in his statement at Montreal that he had gone to the very door of the Quebec Government, and there defied and defeated his opponents, as there is a determination characteristic of the man in the memorable sentence: "I have unfurled the Liberal standard above the

ancient citadel of Quebec, and there I will keep it waving." Almost a quarter of a century has passed since that prophecy was spoken, but the Liberal flag still flies over Quebec East, and over all but eight of the electoral divisions of the old Conservative Province of Quebec.

Mr. Laurier served as Minister under Mr. Mackenzie for only one session. He introduced no very important legislation, but although only a few months in office, he showed an excellent knowledge of the work of his department. He handled his estimates to the satisfaction of his colleagues, and was uniformly considerate and courteous in his treatment of the Opposition. He took a free hand in the general business of the session, and contributed speeches to two or three of its more important discussions. It was, of course, known that dissolution must succeed prorogation, and it was therefore a campaign session, with the tariff and the condition of the country as the chief questions of debate. The Administration was now irrevocably committed to the maintenance of the $17\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. tariff, while the Opposition grew always bolder in the advocacy of undiluted and irredeemable protection. It is true Sir John Macdonald told the Eastern Provinces that a readjustment rather than an increase of the tariff was contemplated; but that historical message was intended to serve local rather than general purposes, and was at variance with the general tone of the

Conservative press, and with the general argument of the campaign literature and the campaign speeches.[1] The Liberal party, with flags flying and drums beating, and with brave show of heart and confidence, marched on to utter defeat.

It has been argued that if Mr. Mackenzie had dissolved Parliament immediately after prorogation, and had gone to the country in June, the Administration might have been sustained. But the contest was not brought on until September, and Sir John Macdonald and his allies had all the summer for speaking and for organization. There seems, however, no good reason to think that even if the earlier date had been chosen the result would have been different. The commercial depression was still severe, the protectionist arguments appealed powerfully to struggling manufacturers, impoverished traders, and idle workmen, and the Conservative leaders were united and aggressive, and inspired by phenomenal successes in a long series of bye-elections. It is fair to say that the Liberal leaders were equally aggressive, but it is not so clear that they were equally united. It is doubtful if Mr. Mackenzie was ever quite the absolute and

[1] In June, 1878, Senator John Boyd, of New Brunswick, wired Sir John Macdonald as follows: "The Government press here state that you propose to raise the tariff generally to thirty-five per cent. Can I contradict this?" In reply Sir John Macdonald said: "It is an absurd falsehood; neither in London nor elsewhere have I gone beyond my motion in Parliament, and have never proposed an increase, but a readjustment of the tariff."

unquestioned leader of the Liberal party. There was an element in Parliament and in the country which thought that Mr. Blake should have succeeded to the leadership of the federal party when he resigned the Premiership of Ontario; and while Mr. Blake himself advocated Mr. Mackenzie's appointment, and accepted the subordinate position, not all of the group who asserted Mr. Blake's superior qualifications for the leadership could be reconciled to Mr. Mackenzie's elevation. A hostile critic, remembering the Aurora platform and Mr. Blake's association with some of the protectionist pioneers of the Canada First movement, has said that the National Policy was Mr. Blake's axe, and was stolen by the Conservatives when out of power to cut down the Mackenzie Administration. This writer represented Mr. Mackenzie and George Brown as bound to the altar of British capital, and devoted to the principle of commercial dependency, and Mr. Blake as the friend of nationality and commercial autonomy.[1] The grounds for this conclusion are not readily apparent, although the motive of the writers who strove with a diligence as great as their ingenuity to set Mr. Blake in antagonism to Brown and Mackenzie is easily understood. Mr. Blake, himself, however, had rather a fitful connection with the Mackenzie Government, now changing portfolios, now serving without portfolio, and now for a season refusing

[1] *The Bystander* for April, 1881.

office altogether—and, most unfortunate of all, during the election contest he was compelled by ill-health to be absent from the country.

For the greater part of his term of office Mr. Mackenzie was cruelly overworked. He never learned to use subordinates in his department nor in Parliament. A worn-out man cannot always be conciliatory. A departmental drudge is not always fit for the delicate and manifold details of party management. The country benefited, the Liberal party suffered, from Mr. Mackenzie's excessive application to public business. Canada has had no other Minister of Public Works equal to Mr. Mackenzie, and perhaps no more powerful debater ever spoke in the Canadian Parliament. In the House and in the country he made magnificent defence of his Administration, and if Providence had been kind, the crops good, and trade flourishing, he could not have been successfully attacked, and his Government could not have been overturned.

It was a violent and bad-tempered campaign. There were speeches made by men of very considerable standing in both parties that are no credit to our political literature. The press, too, was savage and sometimes venomous, but upon the whole its tone was better than that of the politicians. Mr. Mackenzie and his colleagues knew in advance that they would be badly beaten in Quebec, but they looked with confidence to

Ontario and to the Eastern Provinces. The Prime Minister was fully satisfied that he would have a majority in Ontario at least equal to any majority the Conservatives could take out of Quebec. On this point he would scarcely hear argument. While George Brown had moments of doubt and uneasiness, he shared generally in the confidence of the Prime Minister. They could not be persuaded that Ontario would ever overlook the transactions which led to Sir John Macdonald's downfall five years before.[1] Mr. Laurier, on the other hand, had no hope at all that the Government would survive the elections. He was convinced before he entered the Ministry that it was on its death-bed, and was very reluctant to forsake his fine law business at Arthabaskaville for a few months of ministerial apprenticeship at Ottawa. He, of course, gave most of his time to his own province, and spoke in behalf of Liberal candidates in many constituencies. It

[1] In a speech in the House of Commons on March 20th, 1902, Mr. John Charlton, M.P., for North Norfolk, said that the leader of the Reform Government in 1878, and his Ministers had not the slightest anticipation that they were in danger. They did not at all realize the condition of public sentiment. For his part, he held twenty or thirty meetings in each year in his constituency, and felt that his position was critical. He felt that as a supporter of the Mackenzie Government he was liable to be defeated, and in June, 1878, he wrote to Mr. Mackenzie, telling him that, in his opinion, the Government was in a dangerous position, was resting in a fancied security, and might wake up upon the realization of disaster. He advised Mr. Mackenzie to postpone the date of the elections, take measures to have the fiscal question thoroughly discussed in every riding, and the protective policy combated by good speakers everywhere. In reply, Mr. Mac-

was a vain fight, he well knew, so far as Quebec was concerned, but nevertheless he fought at his best, and easily retained his own seat for Quebec East. During the campaign he visited Ontario and spoke at one or two meetings. This experience confirmed his impression that the Government was doomed, and that in Ontario as well as in Quebec public feeling was decisively with Sir John Macdonald and the National Policy. On September 17th, the blow fell. The Government was beaten in every province except New Brunswick. Sir John Macdonald came back to power with a majority of eighty-six at his back, and the era of Protection dawned for Canada.

kenzie, according to Mr. Charlton, "had the kindness to write me a long, long letter, to disabuse my mind of the false impressions I had imbibed; to show me that really I failed entirely to apprehend the drift of public sentiment; to assure me that the Government was perfectly safe; that there was no danger at all; and that it was folly for me to borrow trouble. He went on to enter into details, and to show me the ridings we were sure to carry, the ridings we might possibly lose, the ridings we might possibly gain, and he wound up his survey of the field by the assertion that he would come back to power with a majority of sixty members in the House of Commons. Well, I did not believe it, but when the thunderbolt fell on September 17th, I must confess that I was paralyzed, for I had no anticipation that there would be a majority of sixty on the opposite side. But such was the case."

CHAPTER X

THE CHURCH AND THE STATE

IN order to grasp the full significance of the noteworthy speech on Political Liberalism which Mr. Laurier delivered at Quebec in June, 1877, it is advisable to consider the conditions which necessitated and justified that important deliverance. We have seen in the condemnation of the *Institut Canadien*, in the persecution of Guibord, in the censure passed upon *Le Pays* and other Liberal journals, in the influences arrayed against Mr. Laurier in Drummond and Arthabaska, something of the temper of the Ultramontanes, and something of the unhappy relations existing between the Liberal party and the Roman Catholic hierarchy of Lower Canada. It may be that the clergy misconceived the aims, and misunderstood the spirit of the Liberal party; and did not, for sinister purposes, maintain a deliberate alliance with the Conservative politicians. The assertion of the supremacy of the State in civil affairs is an essential feature of Liberal policy. But Liberalism is equally bound to practise religious tolerance, to respect all honest phases of religious opinion, and to afford equal protection to all forms of religious faith. The Liberal party

of Canada has never sought to proscribe the Roman Catholic religion, to make inquisition into its forms and ceremonies, to restrict in any measure the propagation of its tenets, or force it into any subordinate relationship to the great Protestant denominations. Aside from its assertion of the supremacy of the State in public affairs, the Liberal party has had no quarrel with the Catholic ecclesiastics, and has never flinched from the duty of defence and protest when their legitimate interests were threatened, or their admitted rights imperilled. But from 1870 to 1880 Ultramontanism had a formidable ascendancy in Lower Canada, and as a necessary consequence of the very spirit and constitution of the Liberal party it had to wage a mighty battle for existence against its powerful ecclesiastical opponents.

The *Programme Catholique* was perhaps the first distinct utterance of political Ultramontanism in the Province of Quebec. This document was first published in *Le Journal des Trois Rivières* on April 20th, 1870. Its chief significance lay in an extract from a pastoral letter by the Bishop of Three Rivers. The document, in fact, was an expansion of the pastoral, and did not bear the episcopal *imprimatur*. It developed, however, into the authorized programme of the Jesuits and Ultramontanes, directed and inspired by Bishop Bourget and his allies, and received the direct countenance and sanction of the united episcopacy.

"It is impossible to deny," said the Bishop of Three Rivers, "that politics are closely linked with religion, and that the separation of Church and State is a doctrine absurd and impious. This is especially true under constitutional rule, which, assigning the entire legislative power to Parliament, places in the hands of those who compose it a two-edged weapon which might prove terrible" It was necessary, therefore, that those into whose hands the legislative power was committed, should be in perfect accord with the teachings of the Church. "Full and entire adhesion to Roman Catholic doctrines in religion, in politics, and in social economy ought to be the first and principal qualification which the Catholic electors should require from the candidate." The Conservative party were presented as the defenders of social authority. They were described as a group of men professing sincerely sound principles of religion, patriotism, and nationality, inviolably attached to Catholic doctrines, and manifesting an absolute devotion to the national interests of Lower Canada. Still, support of the Conservative party was to be "subordinated to the interests of religion." The laws touching marriage, education, the erection of parishes, and the compulsory register of marriages, baptisms, and burials, restricted the freedom and authority of the Church, hampered its administration, and could be interpreted in a hostile spirit. "This state of things imposes on Catholic

legislators the duty of changing and modifying these laws in the way in which our Lords the Bishops of the province demand, to the end that they may be put into harmony with the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church." It was, therefore, the duty of the electors to give their votes only to those who were willing to conform entirely to the teachings of the Church in these matters. If two Conservative candidates appeared, the one who subscribed to the Programme should be supported. Where candidates of each party were in nomination, they should vote for the Conservative. If a Conservative who rejected the Programme should be opposed by a Liberal who accepted its propositions, the position, the Bishop admitted, "would be very delicate." Acceptance of such a Conservative would involve the surrender of the main object, while by voting for the Liberal they would put the Conservative party which they desired to see powerful in peril. In such a contingency, therefore, electors were advised to abstain from voting.[1]

The Programme was resisted by powerful influences within the Church itself; by all that group of ecclesiastics who still stood for the Gallican liberties; by the moderate counsels of the Sulpicians; by the liberal spirit of Laval university; and even by Sir George Cartier and some of his political organs. There is also good evidence that Mgr. Baillargeon,

[1] See "Rome in Canada" by Charles Lindsey, pages 153-156.

then Archbishop of Quebec, and his successor, Mgr. Taschereau, sought to curb the zeal of the Ultramontanes. The Primates, however, were opportunists rather than disciples of Gallicanism, and were probably withheld from distinct identification with the Ultramontanes only by their very aggressive action and very immoderate demands. Thus, while Archbishop Taschereau was particularly active in checking and resisting their more extreme pretensions, he was careful to avoid any attack upon the ultramontane doctrines which were then strongly upheld by Pope Leo XIII. The Church of Quebec, like that of France, whence came its form and temper, maintained the unity of the faith with Rome, but cherished the spirit of nationality, accepted the principle of State sovereignty in civil concerns, and maintained large rights of self-government.[1] Ultramontanism, upon the other hand, represents those propositions of the *Syllabus*, which declare that within the sphere which she

[1] Gallicanism is described by Chambers' *Encyclopædia* as that system in Roman Catholic theology, which, while it recognizes the primacy of the Roman Pontiff by divine right over the universal church, yet asserts the independence of national churches in many details of self-government and of local discipline, and limits the exercise of the papal prerogatives by canons and decrees of general councils and by the laws of the universal church.

"It has always been the maxim of the French Court that the Papal power is to be restricted by means of the French clergy, and that the clergy, on the other hand, are to be kept in due limits by means of the papal power." Ranke's "History of the Popes," Bohn's edition, Vol. II., page 420.

chooses to define for herself the Church is superior to the civil authority.

From this time the war against the Gallican ideas was waged with uncompromising rigour. The Sulpicians were crippled by the division of the parish of Notre Dame and by the introduction of Ultramontanes into the new parishes thus created. Laval was attacked, and a determined attempt was made to establish a rival university in Montreal under the inspiration and direction of the Programmists. The *Institut Canadien*, a centre of Gallican teaching, was banned and hunted. The dress of the clergy was changed. The use of the Roman Mantle and Hat was prescribed. The old ornaments of the churchwarden's pew, the crucifix and the *candelabra* were removed and described by Bishop Bourget as mummeries. The old French Ritual was suppressed, with all the ancient Gallican ceremonies. All, in fact, that was characteristic of the Gallican Church was abolished, and Roman and Ultramontane dresses and ceremonies substituted. The Jesuits, who had secured an equivocal incorporation in 1854 as the College of St. Mary, grew in influence and authority, and steadily increased their control over the educational system of the province. The *Fabrique*, a quasi-municipal body designed to control the temporalities of the Church, and to determine the expenditures of the parishes for church purposes, was practically abolished, and the bishop was vested with absolute

power to dispose of church funds. The Legislature was subservient, the masses of the people docile, the Ultramontane arrogant, aggressive, and singularly able and intrepid.

A year after the appearance of the Programme, the golden wedding of the priesthood of Bishop Bourget was celebrated. Archbishops, bishops, and many of the inferior clergy attended, and advantage was taken of the occasion to make bold and defiant assertion of the extreme clerical claims for which Bishop Bourget contended. Father Braun, a Jesuit priest, and a faithful representative of his order, was selected to deliver the sermon. He claimed for the Church the prerogative of making laws to bind the conscience, and to which the State was bound to submit. The Church, he claimed, had the right to make laws on the subject of marriage, to erect parishes without the intervention of the civil power, and to superintend education in the public schools. The State was bound to yield obedience to the Church, and the fashion of looking on the majority as the source of right was a revival of pagan despotism. He declared that Gallicanism and Liberal Catholicism had powerfully contributed to the propagation of many and grave errors. Gallicanism was defined as "insubordination towards the Holy Father, servility to the civil power, despotism towards inferiors." The Gallican refused to obey the Pope, against whom he armed himself with the protection of the powers of this earth, while he gave

to the civil power which protected him in his rebellion all the authority which he refused to the Sovereign Pontiff. Everywhere the Gallicans were the flatterers of the civil power to which they had recourse, even in ecclesiastical cases in which the Bishop or the Pope should have the right of adjudication. Liberalism was condemned with the same unsparing severity. "This," said Father Braun, "is a so-called generosity towards error; it is a readiness to yield on the score of principles. Liberal Catholics grant to the State the right of requiring that parishes, bishoprics, and religious orders be civilly incorporated, as a condition of their having the right to limit the possessions of the Church, and to make laws for regulating the administration of church property. They grant to the State the right of taking possession of church property and keeping it, thus sanctioning the principle of communism. Speak to these sacrilegious usurpers of restitution: their only answer will be a sneer. Liberal Catholics pretend that the State can prescribe the form of marriage, define invalidating impediments, and pronounce upon the conjugal ties in matrimonial causes. Liberal Catholics confide to the State the superintendence and direction of primary schools, to the detriment of the Church and fathers of families. They grant to the State the rights of intervening in the erection of parishes, independently of any authorization of the Holy See." All these fatal errors, he declared, must be

fought against, the State must be entirely subordinated to the Church, must give its civil sanction to the decrees of the Church, and defend and enforce all her claims, both civil and spiritual.

The Roman Catholic Episcopate of Quebec in a Joint Pastoral of September 22nd, 1875, declared that "The Church is not only independent of civil society, but is superior to it by her comprehensiveness and by her end." Again, "The State is therefore in the Church and not the Church in the State." And again, "The priest and the bishop may and ought to speak not only to the electors and candidates, but even to the constituted authorities." The clause denouncing Catholic Liberalism reads: "Catholic Liberalism, says Pius IX., is the most inveterate and the most dangerous enemy of the divine constitution of the Church. Like unto the serpent which crept into the earthly paradise to tempt and bring to ruin the human race, it presents to the children of Adam the deceitful allurement of a certain liberty, and a certain science of good and evil: a liberty and a science which end in death. It seeks to creep imperceptibly into the most holy places; it fascinates the most clear-sighted, and poisons the most ingenuous souls, should their faith in the infallible authority of the Sovereign Pontiff waver ever so little."

Bishop Bourget of Montreal, in promulgating the decrees of the Fifth Council of Quebec, intimated that no candidate should be returned to Parliament

who questioned the right of the priests to employ spiritual censures in elections, or who rejected "the intervention of the Pope, the bishops, and the priests in the affairs of governments." The Bishop of Rimouski, on the eve of the provincial election of 1875, issued a letter to the clergy in which he maintained the right of pastors to influence voters by spiritual censures, and held that it was not permissible to practise moral independence in political questions. The result of these and similar instructions was a very general participation of parish priests in party contests, and in the main against Liberal candidates. As a consequence, public opinion throughout the country was greatly excited, and something very like a religious war prevailed in Lower Canada.

On December 22nd, 1875, a meeting was held at Montreal for the purpose of forming a Protestant Defence Association. Among the chief promoters of the movement were the Rev. Dr. Wilkes, the Rev. Professor MacVicar, M. H. Gault, the Very Rev. Dean Bond, and the Rev. Dr. Douglas. It was set out in the resolutions that such action was necessary, in order to resist the increasingly aggressive spirit of the Roman Catholic hierarchy as shown not only in influencing the Government and Legislature, but in other ways affecting civil and religious rights and liberties in Canada. The objects of the Association were declared to be—the resistance to all efforts on the part of the Roman

Catholic hierarchy to violate the established principles of civil and religious government, and the guidance and protection of Protestants and others who might be exposed to the persecution of the Roman Catholic priesthood. Vigilance committees were appointed to watch and expose all attempts of the Roman Catholic ecclesiastics to influence unduly municipal and other public bodies, to pass upon the character of legislation promoted by the bishops, to supply legal advice in cases touching the civil and religious rights of Protestants, and generally to resist the intrusion of the hierarchy into the field of civil affairs. It may be said by hostile critics that the organizers of this movement were aggressive Protestants, and conspicuous opponents of the dominant church in Quebec, and that they were animated by motives of sectarian bigotry, rather than by concern for the public welfare and zeal for the principles of civil freedom and religious toleration. But a dispassionate examination of the arrogant claims then advanced by the Roman Catholic bishops to supremacy within the realm of the State reveals ample grounds for vigilance and protest, and suggests that the leaders of Protestant thought could hardly have done less than organize to resist the pretensions and encroachments of the Ultramontanes.

We shall better understand the state of public feeling when we recall the extraordinary speech made by the Hon. L. S. Huntington in Argenteuil

a few days after this Protestant Defence Association was formed at Montreal.[1] Mr. Huntington had been in public life for many years, and must have acquired some of the caution and discretion which the practice of politics breeds in even the most impulsive and intemperate characters. Mr. Huntington, however, was not noteworthy for platform indiscretions, and as a Minister of the Crown, was doubly responsible for the taste and temper of his utterances. He must therefore have been moved by immense provocation when he delivered at St. Andrews, on December 30th, 1875, the speech which history will excuse, if it cannot wholly justify. A vacancy had occurred in the representation of Argenteuil in the House of Commons, and a new election was ordered for January 7th, 1876. Dr. Christie was in the field as an independent Liberal candidate, and it was understood that Mr. Thomas White, of Montreal, an able and distinguished journalist, and afterwards a ministerial colleague of Sir John Macdonald, would stand in the Conservative interest.

Mr. White's candidature was in fact definitely announced, and he and Huntington on the date named met at a joint public meeting at St. Andrews. In the course of his remarkable address, the Minister said the time had come when the English Protestants were allying themselves with

[1] Huntington was Postmaster-General in the Mackenzie Government, and represented the County of Shefford in Quebec.

the French Liberals of Lower Canada, and this, he argued, was the only reasonable alliance in the interest of free thought and free speech. He said that twenty years of British Protestant Toryism in Lower Canada had given birth to Ultramontanism, which might work serious trouble in the future. He described Mr. White as the tool of those who were fighting in Lower Canada to make the State subservient to the Church, and declared that "a great battle was imminent; it undoubtedly would be fought and fought soon. There was nothing for it but that the English-speaking people of Lower Canada must ally themselves with the French Liberals who were and always had been the friends of free institutions." He said further: "Let Mr. White stand forth in his true colours, and let the English-speaking people of Argenteuil acknowledge if they desire to send him to Parliament as the ally of the Programme and the apostle of Ultramontanism; and let them declare that the English-speaking people of this province are no longer British; that tolerance and fair play have no charms for them; and that their highest pleasure and duty is to make the State the mere machinery for registering the decrees of the Church." "But, once let them assert themselves," he proceeded, "as the friends of British freedom and justice, and the enemy's guns would be silenced, and the reactionists or their masters would return to the European countries where their opinions are dominant, or elsewhere, to seek

more hopeful grounds for their operations." He said that he desired to compromise no one, but he had always preached those doctrines, and would be prepared at once to resign his position, if he believed the party with whom he acted was not equal to their maintenance. It is perhaps impossible now to determine what effect this utterance had upon the electors of Argenteuil, but at least Mr. White withdrew from the contest, and Dr. Christie was elected by acclamation.

The speech made a national sensation. It was pounced upon with positive glee by the Ultramontane press and many of the organs of the Conservative party. Here was a deliverance which seemed to threaten the Church, and therefore to excuse, if not to justify protest from the great Catholic and French elements of the population against the illiberal and inquisitorial spirit of the Liberal party. Mr. Huntington, a Liberal Minister, called on the English-speaking minority of Quebec to unite against the Church of the French-speaking majority, and therefore French and Catholics must stand together in defence of their race and faith. The speech, in fact, was admirably calculated to inflame the zeal of the organs and agents of the obscurantist movement, and was just such a weapon as the *Bleu* politicians could use to advantage in French and Catholic communities.[1] There was a

[1] "I then read some extracts from Hon. Mr. Huntington's speech which I now produce; I then explained what was the bearing of that

measure of justification, both for Mr. Huntington's position and for that of his assailants. The Liberal party had a right to expect that the English-speaking people would support its contention for the supremacy of the State in civil concerns, and join with the French Liberals to put down undue clerical interference in political contests. But in essence at least the speech savoured of appeal to race feeling, and such appeal was absolutely inadmissible. We shall better get the point of view if we conceive an appeal by a French Canadian politician to the French-speaking majority of

discourse; I spoke then of the pastoral letter of the bishops of the ecclesiastical Province of Quebec, and I said that Catholic Liberalism was condemned, and that I myself, knowing the meaning of the bearing of Huntington's speech and of the pastoral letter of the bishops, I should believe I was committing a sin if I voted for Mr. P. A. Tremblay."—Evidence of Rev. Francois Cinq-Mars, parish priest of St. Simeon, in the Charlevoix Election Case.

"I contended that a Minister of the Crown who professed the principles advocated by Mr. Huntington could not and should not have Catholics as colleagues, and that a Government having this Minister as one of its members could not be supported by Catholics, except if these accept the denomination of Liberal Catholics, condemned by the bishops' *mandement*. I wanted to cause people to understand that if Mr. Tremblay supported the Government to which Mr. Huntington belonged, he was to be considered as holding the opinions expressed by the Minister, and therefore be considered as a Liberal Catholic. . . . . Mr. Huntington still remaining a Minister, I was of opinion that a Catholic should not and could not support that Government, and that Mr. Tremblay who supported that Administration was therefore to be classed among the Liberal Catholics who are condemned by the bishops' pastoral letter."—Evidence of Sir Hector Langevin in the Charlevoix Election Case.

Quebec to unite upon a religious, or even upon a more legitimate public issue. Mr. Huntington had the right to address an argument against clerical intimidation to English and French electors alike, but it was mischievous and dangerous to limit his appeal to one element of the population, and, moreover, calculated to prejudice the position of the French Liberals whose cause he sought to serve.

The speech seriously disturbed Catholic Liberals all over the country. One of these, Mr. Power, M.P. for Halifax, on January 17th, addressed a letter to the Minister in which he admitted that some Catholic priests, clergymen, and newspapers might have taken an improper course in politics, and said that if Huntington had confined his remarks to these offenders no one could reasonably have found fault. He contended, however, that Huntington's remarks were unfortunately not so confined and were therefore calculated to give offence to Catholics generally. Doubtless the purpose of this letter was to draw an explanation from Huntington, and in his reply of January 28th, the Minister insisted that he did confine his remarks to "such offenders" and continued: "So far from dreaming of attacking Catholics as a body, I thought I was defending against the political action of certain of their co-religionists that large proportion of the Catholic population with which it has been my good fortune

to act for years." He did not introduce, he said, but on the contrary, protested against the introduction of religious controversy into political conflicts, and believed that Catholic and Protestant might and should agree to differ on these political questions, altogether irrespective of their religious opinions, and that any other line of action would be subversive of our institutions. Whether this explanation was or was not satisfactory to Mr. Power does not appear. It certainly was not satisfactory to the mass of Catholic Liberals, and many leading Protestant Liberals felt that something more must be done to overcome the effects of Huntington's Argenteuil deliverance.

Parliament met early in February, and during the debate on the Address, Mr. Holton rose and called on Mr. Mackenzie to accept or disavow responsibility for the utterances of his colleague. He characterized Mr. Huntington's speech as "a most unfortunate one," and as an attempt "to stir up religious strife in the Province of Quebec." He described it as "a very offensive attack upon the dignitaries of the Church of the great majority of the people of Quebec, and constituting a very large proportion of the people of this whole Dominion." He reminded the House that Mr. Huntington had closed his speech in Argenteuil with the declaration that those were his opinions, that he was satisfied that they were the opinions of his party, and that if he were not sustained in the expression

of those opinions he would resign his position. He, therefore, demanded to know if Mr. Huntington had received instructions to make any such speech, or whether the Prime Minister "now approves of the substance of these remarks, or of the good taste, good judgment, and statesmanship of the Hon. Postmaster General in making this utterance."[1]

From no one could this censure have come with more crushing effect than from Mr. Holton. He was the Nestor of the Liberal party in Quebec. The services that he had performed for Liberalism in Canada were matched by few of his contemporaries, and, indeed, have been equalled by few of his successors. His courage, independence, and integrity were alike unquestioned, and it is natural to think that he would not have ventured to pass this stern judgment upon Huntington, if he had not been profoundly persuaded that his course in Argenteuil was fraught with danger to the Liberal party, and inimical to the peace and good government of the country. There is, it is fair to say, a tradition in the Liberal party that the relations between Mr. Holton and Mr. Huntington were not quite cordial. It became a question when the Mackenzie Government was formed whether Holton or Huntington should be selected as the representative in the Cabinet of the English minority of Quebec. Under ordinary circumstances Holton would doubtless have been

[1] Hansard, February 11th, 1876, pages 19-21.

chosen. But Huntington was particularly active in formulating and driving home the charge of corrupt dealings between Conservative Ministers and Sir Hugh Allan over the Pacific Railway Charter, and into his hands fell the incriminating documents which revealed Allan's direct contributions to Sir John Macdonald and Sir George Cartier. In consequence of his activity in this memorable prosecution, he was violently assailed by the Conservative politicians and their press, and it was felt that if he were excluded from the Cabinet it would be an intense satisfaction to his personal and political enemies, and would seem like an abandonment by his own party associates. Hence he was admitted to the Cabinet and Mr. Holton necessarily excluded. Holton bowed to Mr. Mackenzie's judgment with excellent temper, the more easily as he was not excessively anxious to take a portfolio, and remained the staunch friend and ally of the Prime Minister. But friends of Huntington contend that while Holton at the moment recognized the expediency of Huntington's appointment to the Government, he was not so well convinced that his rival should have taken office, and cherished his own superior claims to the leadership of the English minority of Lower Canada. This tradition may be unjust to Holton, but, at least, he was a suspicious critic of Huntington, and possibly was influenced more than he knew by the non-recognition of his long service in the Liberal party and great influence in the country.

The story of politics is full of serious personal differences developed in just such fashion, and even very great men have shown that they can be sorely wounded and influenced in all their political relationships by the loss of personal preferment. If, however, it be true that Holton and Huntington were estranged, at least Holton's devotion to his principles and loyalty to his party were absolutely unaffected.

Mr. Holton's speech put the Prime Minister in a difficult position. He could not afford to pass direct condemnation upon a colleague, and he knew that Mr. Huntington had spoken the inner convictions of many thousands of Liberals throughout the country. He knew also that if not repudiated, the speech must work great mischief in French and Catholic communities, and that these elements represented forty per cent. of the voting population of Canada. In reply to Mr. Holton, therefore, the Prime Minister was necessarily guarded, and avoided direct repudiation of the utterance of his Minister. He said he did not approve of anything that had a tendency to bring religion into public discussion in the politics of the country. He called the attention of Parliament to the fact that in his published letter addressed to Mr. Power, of Halifax, Huntington had explained that he did not design any attack upon the Catholic Church in his speech, and declared he had no doubt that this was the case, because he had too much faith in Huntington's

own generous disposition and correct appreciation of the public affairs of the country to believe that he could be a party to a desire to assail any religious denomination.[1]

Of course the Premier's statement was not satisfactory to Mr. Masson, Mr. Langevin, and other Conservative leaders from Lower Canada, and the debate in its wide range covered the more recent history of public affairs in Quebec, the attitude of the hierarchy in political contests, and the measure of obedience due from Catholic laymen to the heads of the Church. Mr. Masson declared that as a Conservative and an Ultramontane, he was ready to give to the clergy in religious questions submission and confidence, and upon questions relating to the material progress of the country and its political affairs that respect for their opinions to which they were entitled owing to their high intelligence, their great virtue, and their disinterestedness, but no more. He absolutely rejected the doctrine that the clergy should remain in their vestries, and asked "whether, if the clergy of Lower Canada had remained in their vestries we would belong to-day to the noble Empire of England?" Further, whether Catholics were priest-ridden or not was none of Mr. Huntington's business, nor the business of any man who did not profess the Catholic creed. Mr. Langevin denounced Huntington's speech as an "insult aimed at the Catholic population of the

[1] Hansard, February 11th, 1876, page 20.

Dominion and the bishops of Lower Canada," and contended that the clergy had a right to interfere in elections, and that they claimed only the privileges of citizens. Neither quite justified spiritual coercion and intimidation; but they put up a very thorough defence of their clerical allies, and had no word of condemnation for their pretensions to supreme authority in the realm of the State, and partisan activity in many of the French constituencies. Mr. Cauchon also took occasion to repudiate and condemn his colleague in the Cabinet. Mr. Mackenzie Bowell, one of the Orange leaders from Ontario, was likewise distressed by the Minister's indiscretion. In short, judgment was generally pronounced against Huntington, the relations between the Church and the Liberal party were much aggravated, and very considerable capital was made of the affair by the Conservative politicians.[1]

But Huntington was neither silenced nor intimidated. He at length intervened in the debate, and it is manifest that his chief regret was that his speech at Argenteuil had bred a difference between

[1] The *Canadian Monthly* of March, 1876, in a comment on Mr. Mackenzie Bowell's speech, said: "The Grand Master sits in Parliament cheek by jowl with one who boasts himself the 'leader of the Ultramontanes,' and applauds his utterances without qualification, and the Order is at this moment the Ontario wing of the politico-theological army, of which Mgr. Bourget is the chief, and M. Masson or M. Langevin the first lieutenant." In consequence, however, of attacks on his position in Parliament during this debate Mr. Bowell said later, in a letter to the *Christian Guardian*, "I never, even by implication, disapproved of the sentiments in the speech of Mr. Huntington."

Holton and himself. He told the House that the speech under consideration was pronounced by himself in his native Province of Quebec to his own people, and upon a question in which they were deeply concerned. No member of the Government was responsible for the speech, and he had the right to express his individual opinions to his own people. "The opinions which I expressed are my opinions. They were my opinions then and are my opinions now." He said further: "Looking at the great conflict going on in Lower Canada, and being among my own people, the people over whom I desire to exercise a certain influence, which intention I then and there described, I spoke to them of the dread I had of the Ultramontanes, and I asked them to give to the Liberals their aid. This is the head and front of my offending. I said what I say now, that they ought to do it, and I believe they will do it." He declared that he was not ashamed of his alliance with the Quebec Liberals, that they, like himself, had upheld free institutions against very powerful influences, that he had not spoken as a Minister but as a Lower Canadian and a citizen of that province, and still maintained that the true course of the British population in Quebec was to ally themselves with the French Liberals in their efforts to maintain free institutions.[1]

One other speech that was made in this debate

[1] Hansard, February 11th, 1876, page 36.

should not be passed over without mention. Mr. Bechard represented Iberville in the Commons for thirty years, and was appointed to the Senate a few months after Mr. Laurier became Prime Minister. Modest in bearing, moderate in statement, of high character and solid attainments, he is a fine type of the old *Rouge* who stood unflinchingly for freedom of thought and freedom of speech throughout all the stormy era of ecclesiastical despotism in Quebec. He asked the House to remember that for years the Liberal party of Lower Canada had been denounced by the Conservative press and upon the hustings at each election as composed of men hostile to the Roman Catholic Church. He took direct issue with the contention of Mr. Langevin that priests had the right to speak from the pulpit in favour of particular candidates. "I do not think so," he said, "else it would be necessary to believe that the priests have the right to control the politics of the country, and at the elections to impose their will upon the electors; and it would also be necessary to conclude, if the contentions of the Conservative party in this respect were admitted to be well founded, that to be a Catholic it is requisite to be also a Conservative." This sturdy French Liberal proceeded, in his careful and correct English, to say that for years many French Canadian Conservatives had spoken more of religion than of politics on the hustings, and had denounced the Liberal party as hostile to the

Church, "to sustain whom or elevate to power would be to materially damage the interests of the Church." He charged that the Conservatives sought to make the electors of Quebec believe that the Liberal party sympathized with "the subversive and utterly absurd doctrines of the French socialists." At each election this was a plank in the Conservative platform, and these tactics he denounced as constituting "a deplorable state of things." Finally he had the courage to declare that Huntington's speech "was provoked to a certain extent by the conduct of the Conservative press in introducing religious questions into the discussion of political matters whenever opportunity offered."[1] This was frank speaking, and it cannot be doubted that Mr. Bechard exactly described the situation in Quebec, and correctly indicated and properly characterized the influences which provoked, if they did not justify, Mr. Huntington's disturbing utterance in the county of Argenteuil.

Mr. Huntington was not the only representative of the English minority in Quebec to speak out against the aggressive and intolerant policy of the Roman Catholic ecclesiastics. Sir Alexander Galt was not a Liberal, it was not his habit to traffic in race and sectarian issues for partisan purposes, and he was well entitled, by virtue of his high character and his eminent services to Canada, to address the Canadian people on any grave question of public

[1] Hansard, February 11th, 1876, pages 45-47.

concern. Just at this time he put out two pamphlets dedicated to Mr. Gladstone, who was then thundering against the Vatican decrees. These pamphlets were designed "to oppose and protest against the efforts now being made by the Roman Catholic hierarchy of Quebec to impose upon those belonging to their communion the extreme doctrines of the Italian ecclesiastical school."

In the course of his argument Galt remarked that it was "eminently suggestive of the light in which our Quebec rulers are regarded, to observe the very different ground occupied by the Roman Catholic Church in this province, from that taken in Ontario and the Maritime Provinces." He contended that: "The contradictory attitude of the Church of Rome in different countries, and at this moment even in the Dominion, can only be explained by the extraordinary elasticity with which it adapts itself to surrounding circumstances. Wherever it reigns supreme and controls the civil Government, it is exclusive, despotic, and grasping; but when, as in England and until lately in Canada, it is unconnected with the State, it confines itself to its proper functions of teaching piety and morality." He quoted at length to prove this policy of adaptation, to show that the Church had never absolutely withdrawn from any of its alleged franchises, to establish that in this age the Church would not insist upon its extreme claims when vigorously resisted, and to demonstrate that the hierarchy

was then striving to introduce into Quebec innovations equally repugnant to the Catholic as to the Protestant. He contended that for some years there had been a steady invasion of the Roman Catholic clerical body in Lower Canada by "the energetic spirit of the Ultramontane," and that "The bishops were brought more directly under the control of the Sacred College; vacancies in the Episcopate were filled with men more suited to the requirements of Rome; greater development was given to the establishment of religious bodies; and the control of education, both in its higher and inferior branches, was sought to be placed in the hands of the priesthood."

He quoted various official utterances of the hierarchy in Quebec inimical to the exercise of free speech, a free press, and free political action, and charged that they sought to "rivet the most extreme pretensions of the *Syllabus* on the consciences of their people, wholly disregarding the moderate and wise course of action laid down by Archbishop Lynch of Ontario and Archbishop Connolly of Nova Scotia." He argued from the evidence produced that the Catholic Church in Quebec extended its demands to the general assertion of the superiority of ecclesiastical over civil authority; to positive interference with both voters and candidates in the elections; to the exercise of proscription against the press; to the condemnation of freedom of speech in opposition to the judgment of the Privy

Council as declared in the Guibord appeal; and to the extraordinary proposition, to use Galt's language, that the Divine assistance held to be given to the Pope alone when speaking *ex cathedra* on "faith and morals," descended with undiminished force to the bishops, priests, and curés. He saw in the attitude of the political leaders forcible evidence of their conviction that victory would rest with the party favoured by the Roman Catholic Church; declared that the provincial Government had passed completely under the influence of the hierarchy; and doubted if language more expressive of profound submission to the priesthood could be found than that used by Mr. Masson and Mr. Langevin when Huntington's speech was under consideration in the House of Commons. In his closing sentences he warned the Church that if "this struggle is allowed to extend and intensify, then the day which sees the triumph of the priest will usher in that which will overthrow his power forever. It is impossible that in a province of the Protestant Empire of Great Britain, on the continent of America, in the presence of forty millions of Protestants, a slavery should be imposed upon us by the Roman Catholic hierarchy, which exists no longer even under the shadow of the Vatican. Free speech, free thought, and a free press must have the fullest scope in America; and if, in a wild scheme to reduce them to obedience to the will of the priesthood, they be for the moment repressed,

all history tells us that the torrent when it bursts will sweep away far more than the barrier that arrested its course, and will leave behind the wreck of many noble Catholic institutions, to mock the folly of those who make unwilling adversaries of natural and affectionate friends." Finally Galt called for an organization composed of Catholics and Protestants, irrespective of creed, nationality, or political party, for the maintenance of the civil rights of the people, and declared his conviction that "such an organization, thoroughly in earnest, would bring sufficient pressure on our rulers, both at Ottawa and Quebec, to insure their compliance, and to settle for our day at least the proper and harmonious relations of Church and State."[1]

Galt repeated many of these arguments in an address in June, 1876, at Toronto. He emphasized the great influence which 65 members could exert in a Parliament of 206 members, contended that the party which could secure the vote of Quebec could control the Dominion, and substantially argued that the party which submitted to the domination of the Church could control Quebec. He protested his freedom from mere sectarian prejudice, and denied that he sought to interfere with any man's faith, or to create or promote religious dissension in the country. He was concerned only with the assertion and maintenance

[1] See the pamphlet "Church and State" by Sir Alex. T. Galt, K.C.M.G., published at Montreal in 1876.

of the civil rights of the people; opposed to the increasing measure of clerical control over education in Quebec; to the dangerous power vested in the ecclesiastics for the erection of parishes; to the claims of the Church to superior power over other religious denominations in virtue of the Act of Capitulation; and to its arrogant interference in political contests.

A few weeks after this address was delivered, Archbishop Lynch spoke at length on the relations which, according to Catholic doctrine, should obtain between Church and State, and the measure of interference in public affairs permissible to Catholic ecclesiastics. The address is an able and scholarly review of the history of the Church in its relations to rulers and governments. While furnishing a reading of history which perhaps few Protestants will accept, it still claims no such liberty and authority for the hierarchy as the Ultramontanes of Quebec demanded and exercised. The Archbishop contended that when the Pope dethroned kings, he did so, not as the head of the Church, but as Chief Executive of the Catholic confederation of States, called in the middle ages Christendom, and, by the general consent of the time, as arbiter. The earlier Church never used the power, but it judged what were heresies and blasphemies, and handed over those who were guilty of these offences to be punished by the State authorities. The divine right of kings was not Catholic

doctrine, and the Church was not inimical to popular government. Where the people framed their own laws and governed themselves, priests might instruct them to use their franchise properly and place men in Parliament who would vote for good measures. They should instruct the people to abhor bribery or the sale of votes at elections, and to avoid calumnies, lies, and everything that would injure private character or disturb the public peace. But they ought not to prostitute their sacred character for merely party purposes, or use the Church and the altar as the battle ground of contending factions. In purely temporal matters the priest had no concern and could act only as a citizen. "If the State should infringe on the rights of the Church so as to hinder its free action in spiritual matters, then the priest, as religion and the peace of the Church are at stake, is to assume his sacred character, and to oppose by mild persuasion a misdirected legislation." When political questions touched upon the domain of religion, then the priest must defend his Church, under the direction of his bishops, with all prudence and charity. In mixed religious political questions a great prudence was required. A mutual good understanding between the Church and a Christian State would be right and would tend to the happiness of a Christian people. But a union of Church and State such as prevailed in England where the Church was the handmaid of the State and where

statesmen through the Queen, whether in the Privy Council or out of it, had sovereign authority over the Church both in the appointments of its bishops and in its teachings, or such a union as Bismarck desired to establish between Church and State in Germany, was essentially wrong. The State in its temporal concerns should not be the handmaid of the Church, but the State should be under the directive influence of the Church established by the Lord Jesus Christ himself. The so-called union of Church and State had often resulted in the enslaving of the Church.

There was said to be a certain union between Church and State in Quebec because the clergy could collect their dues from the Catholic inhabitants by the assistance of the courts of law. Protestants, however, had no grievances to complain of under this head, and the immense majority of Catholics were satisfied to contribute to the support of their Church in this way. Besides, Catholics were not forced to remain in the Church. They could give notice of withdrawal at any time and escape these obligations. This, however, was no concern of the people of Upper Canada, and had nothing whatever to do with the Protestant population of either province. There was no injustice inflicted, nor any grievances without a remedy. Protestants might show extreme kindness in pitying the Catholics who were satisfied with the law as it existed, but their sympathies might perhaps be

turned to better account. The Church enjoyed freedom in Canada, and the interest of religion was to maintain the authority of the State and to preach loyalty to our well-ordered government. There might be parties and difference of opinions, but all agreed in unbounded loyalty to the institutions of the country.[1]

[1] Lecture in St. Michael's Cathedral, June 25th, 1876.

CHAPTER XI

THE PRIEST IN POLITICS

BYE-ELECTIONS in Charlevoix and in Chambly came very closely at the heels of the contest in Argenteuil, during which Mr. Huntington had made his appeal to the English-speaking electorate of Quebec to unite with the French-Canadian Liberals against undue clerical interference in political contests. Each election was marked by an extraordinary exhibition of clerical arrogance and a ruthless denunciation of the candidates of the Liberal party. M. Lussier, the curé of Boucherville, hesitated to read the joint letter of the bishops which declared the supremacy of the Church in civil affairs, for fear that it would excite dissent among his parishioners, but he was forced to submit by peremptory orders from the Bishop of Montreal. Dr. Fortier, the ministerial candidate in Chambly, announced himself a *Rouge* and a moderate Liberal; and the fact elicited this statement from Bishop Bourget: "Our Holy Father, the Pope, and after him the archbishop and bishops of this province, have declared that Catholic Liberalism is a thing to be regarded with the abhorrence with which one contemplates a pestilence; no Catholic is allowed to proclaim himself a moderate Liberal;

consequently this moderate Liberal cannot be elected a representative by Catholics."

In Charlevoix, as in Chambly, the priests violently assailed the Liberal candidate and the Liberal party. Mr. Hector L. Langevin was the nominee of the Conservatives, and he was opposed by Mr. Tremblay in the Liberal interest. One priest denounced Catholic Liberals as "ravening wolves who come to raise a disturbance in the flock, who come to tell you that the Pope, the bishops, and the clergy have nothing to do with politics. Beware of their perverse teaching! they want to seclude the priests in the church and the vestry, in order to succeed better in their unchristian work, which is to scatter and divide the flock of Jesus Christ." He said to his people: "You greatly need to open your eyes, my brethren, on the abyss of evils into which the partisans of Catholic Liberalism would throw you." They should listen to the salutary teachings of the bishops in their pastoral letter upon the tendencies of the self-styled Catholic Liberal party. They should not allow themselves to be fascinated by the deceitful words of "the serpent Catholic Liberal." They knew in what manner the serpent found his way into the terrestrial paradise. In the same manner Catholic Liberalism wished to find its way into the paradise of the Church to lead its children to fall. "Be firm, my brethren. Our bishops tell us that it is no longer permitted to be conscientiously a Catholic

Liberal; be careful never to taste the fruit of the tree Catholic Liberal." They were adjured to pay no attention to those priests who said the clergy were mistaken and were going too far. These were not their legitimate pastors. He knew that such letters were circulated purporting to have been written by priests in Quebec, but he called that not only undue influence, but also improper and unbecoming influence. "Beware," he said "of these false prophets who wish to bring disunion between you and your legitimate pastors. Do not listen to their falsehoods and their calumnies. Obey the Vicar of Jesus Christ condemning Catholic Liberalism."

Another priest warned his parishioners that to vote for a Liberal was to set out on the road to hell; and in a subsequent statement made to the archbishop, explanatory of what he had said in his sermons, he admitted that he had instructed the electors to "vote according to your conscience, enlightened by your superiors. Do not forget that the bishops of the province assure you that Liberalism resembles the serpent which crawls in the terrestrial paradise to procure the fall of the human race." He told his flock that "the Church condemns only what is evil, and as Liberalism has been condemned, Liberalism is evil; therefore you ought not to give your suffrages to a Liberal." A third priest intimated that whoever voted for the Liberals engaged in the service of

hell. The curé of the parish of Baie St. Paul denounced the Liberals as false prophets and false Christs, and declared that they wished to walk in the blood of priests. He said: "They will do so much that they will unmask themselves, and will show themselves as they are, so as to leave no doubt as to their aim. There are some whose hearts are so black that if a religious persecution were to break out at this moment, they would be the first to hold the rope or the knife that would give us the death blow. In blaming and criticising as they do the word of God and of his ministers, in presence of their children, certain parents assume a terrible responsibility before God. When they will be dead and reduced to ashes they will have left children who perhaps will be ready to steep their hands in the blood of the priests, if ever a religious persecution breaks out."

One witness at the memorable election trial which followed this contest, said in evidence: "I was afraid that if I voted for Tremblay I should be damned." Another witness understood that one who voted for the Liberal party was guilty of a mortal sin, and if he should die in that state would not be entitled to the services of a priest. Another swore that the curé of St. Fidèle had declared from the pulpit that Catholic Liberalism and political Liberalism were one and the same thing, and that Liberalism was condemned by the bishops. One elector explained that he was old and

would soon die, and therefore could not vote against the opinion of his curé. It was sworn that the curé of St. Hilarion declared from the pulpit that to vote for the Liberal party was to be against the curé, against the bishops, and against the Pope himself; that there were two banners to follow, the red one and the blue one; that the blue banner represented the Pope and the Church, and the red one represented Victor Emanuel and Garibaldi. "He explained to us," said this witness, "that the blue banner was that of the Conservative party and the red one that of the Liberal party." Out of the twelve curés and the two vicaires of the county eight curés and one vicaire were accused, and against seven curés and one vicaire evidence was produced.

Mr. Langevin's right to sit for Charlevoix was attacked in the courts, and mainly on account of the exercise of "undue influence" and "spiritual and temporal intimidation" in his behalf. The trial lasted for six weeks, and two hundred witnesses were examined. The defence sought to show that the priests spoke as citizens, and had not resorted to spiritual censures, and in any event were not amenable to the civil tribunals. On all points they were overborne by the weight of evidence. Judge Routhier, however, before whom the case was heard, refused to annul the election. He argued that the free exercise of the Roman Catholic religion, guaranteed at the conquest, established

the ecclesiastical law of Rome in Quebec; that the court could not interfere with the liberty of Christian preaching; that voting was a moral act; and the priests therefore acted within their own proper domain. Thus he reasoned: "Immunity *de persona* is the real privilege of one's own competent court. It is personal, inherent in every ecclesiastic, and it consists in this, that the ecclesiastic cannot be accused or cited before any other than an ecclesiastical tribunal. This personal immunity of the priest extends to all cases of whatever nature, save with a few rare exceptions which it would take too long time to enumerate. Whether he acts as a priest or as a citizen in public life, or as an individual in private life, he is always an 'ecclesiastical person,' and as such he enjoys the privilege of the competent tribunal, that is, that he may object to the jurisdiction of any lay court." He continued: "Such is the Catholic doctrine, and I can explain it in a few words. I am incompetent in all cases in which the question to be decided appertains to dogmatic doctrine, morals, or discipline, and also in those where the person prosecuted is an ecclesiastic. I am competent to judge the acts of a priest in so far as they may affect the rights of third parties, provided these acts be of a temporal nature, and that the person of the priest is not involved." Religious preaching, he contended, was one of the most important parts of religion. It would not be free, if judges could decide that in certain cases it was

liable to fine and imprisonment. Under such circumstances the religious liberty guaranteed by the Constitution would be a dead letter. He pointed out that the bishops of the province had addressed a pastoral letter to their flocks, strongly condemning Catholic Liberalism, and claiming for the clergy free intervention in politics. It was to fulfil this mission that the curés, " while explaining and commenting on the pastoral letter of the bishops, denounced before the electors this condemned Liberalism." He was not in a position to say whether the petitioner was a Liberal in the sense condemned by the clergy, but the priest could not abstain from denouncing Liberalism when that duty was imposed upon him by his ecclesiastical superiors. If he maintained the demands of the petitioner he would be obliged to suppress all the condemnations of Liberalism and of Liberals which were found in the pastoral letters, in the decrees of the Councils, and in the evangelical letters. Finally Judge Routhier declared: "It would be arbitrary to interdict the clergy from any intervention in politics, and it would be absurd to make this court judge of the merits of the candidates and of political parties, and of the orthodoxy of the doctrines preached by the priests and by the bishops."

The case was appealed to the Supreme Court, and there upon the subject of undue influence, the defence maintained that ecclesiastics were answerable for their conduct only to their ecclesiastical

superiors and to ecclesiastical tribunals; that no ecclesiastic could be summoned before a civil tribunal without leave from his ecclesiastical superior; and that "the Church alone has the right of judging within what limits, in what circumstances, and under what forms, the right of preaching should be used; otherwise civil society would encroach on religious society." But Judge Routhier's decision was reversed, and the election voided. Judgments were delivered by Mr. Justice Taschereau and Mr. Justice Ritchie. Judge Taschereau emphasized the fact that Mr. Langevin consented to become a candidate only on assurances that he would have the support of the clergy, and pointed out that during the contest he had had personal conferences with the clergy, had stated at public meetings that they were favourable to his candidature, and told the electors that they should take the advice of their pastors. The curés denounced the Liberal candidate, took part in the election with Mr. Langevin's consent, and therefore became his agents. The sermons preached in denunciation of the Liberal candidate created in the minds of many electors a dread of committing grievous sin and being deprived of the sacraments. "There is here," Mr. Justice Taschereau said, "an exerting of undue influence of the worst kind, inasmuch as these threats and these declarations fell from the lips of the priests speaking from the pulpit in the name of religion, and were addressed to persons ill-instructed and

generally well-disposed to follow the counsels of their curés." The sermons probably had small influence on the intelligent and instructed portion of the electorate, but must have influenced the majority of persons void of instruction. It was clear, he thought, that a general system of intimidation had been practised, and that the electors were not free in the exercise of the franchise.

Mr. Justice Taschereau also dealt with the claim of clerical immunity which had been set up in behalf of the offending curés. He said: "The tribunal which is to take cognizance of the contestation of an election is indicated by law," but as for the ecclesiastical tribunal, "for me it is intangible, non-existent in this country, being incapable of existing effectively therein, but by the joint action of the episcopacy and of the civil power, or by the mutual consent of the parties interested; and in the latter case it would be only in the form of a conventional arbitration, which would be binding on no one but the parties themselves. If this tribunal exists, I am not aware that it has any code of law or procedure; it would have no power to summon the parties and the witnesses, nor to execute its judgments. And if it existed, it would be very singular to see the Jew seeking at the hands of a Catholic bishop the justice he can claim from the civil tribunals, and submitting to corporeal punishment adjudged by that tribunal; and the same might be said of any other individual belonging

to a different religion." He could not admit the extraordinary opinion that a Catholic priest, speaking from the pulpit, might defame whomsoever he pleased, and then shelter himself from responsibility by pleading immunity. "The law," he declared, "expressly forbids all undue influence, from whatsoever source it may arise, and without any distinction."

Mr. Justice Ritchie in his judgment said: "On the principles of common law, on the construction of the language of the act, of which we entertain no doubt, we cannot for a moment doubt that it is our duty to declare that undue spiritual influence is prohibited by statute." The clergyman, he proceeded, has no right in the pulpit or out by threatening any damage, temporal or spiritual, to restrain the liberty of a voter, so as to compel or frighten him into voting, or abstaining from voting, otherwise than as he freely wills.

Judges Casault, McGuire, and McCord in voiding the return of a Conservative to the Quebec Legislature for Bonaventure in 1876, unanimously decided that the clergy were at liberty to express their opinions on political questions, but that the menace of spiritual penalties constituted undue influence. Judge Casault, one of the Catholic judges who tried this case, argued that all the freedom guaranteed to the Roman Catholic Church in Canada by the Treaty of Paris must be understood and interpreted by the concluding clause of the fourth

article of that treaty: "His Britannic Majesty on his side consents to accord freedom of the Catholic religion to the inhabitants of Canada. He will, in consequence, give the most effectual orders that his new Roman Catholic subjects may practise their religious worship according to the rites of the Church of Rome in so far as the laws of England will permit." This was to say that the Catholic religion was not above British law, and that the Treaty of 1763 gave to the authorities of the Catholic Church no rights incompatible with the laws of England. The judges made it plain also that the Conservative candidate had endorsed and adopted all that was said by the priests during the contest, and that they thus became his agents; but intimated that without reasonable proof of agency no candidate could be held responsible for the utterances of the clergy, or even for the attempted exercise of spiritual intimidation. In this case, however, the Conservative candidate suffered the severe sentence of disqualification, as the Judges found, "that these fraudulent manœuvres were practised with his knowledge and consent."

There was murmuring and protest by certain of the bishops against these judgments. The Bishop of Rimouski particularly denounced the judgment of Mr. Justice Casault. He condemned as false and contrary to the teachings of the Church the following propositions: (1) That Parliament is omnipotent and competent to pass all laws even if opposed to

the exercise of religion; (2) That the liberty of electors should be absolute; (3) That it is for the civil courts to repress the abuses which may occur in preaching and the refusal of the sacraments; (4) That the threat of the refusal of the sacraments with regard to elections is an undue influence, a fraudulent manœuvre within the competence of the civil courts; (5) That an unjust oath should be observed. Bishop Langevin also appealed to Archbishop Taschereau of Quebec to have Judge Casault deposed from his law professorship in Laval University of which the archbishop was Chancellor. The demand was referred to Rome, and a decision in favour of the judge returned. Some months before, Rome had reported adversely on the project of the Ultramontanes to establish a rival to Laval at Montreal. In September, 1876, a papal bull was sent out and promulgated by the archbishop, granting canonical establishment to Laval, and endorsing its doctrines and practices.

Other evidence indicative of the archbishop's disapproval of the extreme demands of the Ultramontanes had appeared. He was probably influenced by the stern resistance offered by many French Liberals to the attempt of their spiritual guardians to destroy their freedom of political action. At any rate, on May 25th, 1876, the archbishop issued a pastoral letter which forbade the priests to discuss political questions in the church or at the church door, to volunteer advice on the subject of elections

under any circumstances, or even to give political counsel while making pastoral visits or in attendance on the sick. It was understood that this pastoral, which seemed to limit the legitimate rights of the clergy, was issued in consequence of representations made to Rome against their attitude towards the Liberal party, or at least against the activity of the clergy in elections. A delegation was therefore despatched to Rome to make explanations and counter-representations.[1]

The final result was a papal brief, dated September 13th, 1876, in which it is said: "We rejoice chiefly at the care you take to inculcate among the Canadian people sound doctrine, and to explain to them what regards the nature, the constitution, and the rights of the Church, the conception of which it is customary to present with great subtlety for the purpose of deceiving the faithful; and we have had to praise the zeal with which you have striven to forewarn the same people against the crafty errors of *Liberalisme* called *Catholique*, the more dangerous, that under an exterior appearance of piety they deceive many honest men, and that, tending to lead men away from the true doctrine, especially on questions which at first sight seem to concern rather the civil than the ecclesiastical power, they enfeeble the faith, break the unity,

[1] Mr. Tremblay, the Liberal candidate in Charlevoix, was one of those who made representations to the religious authorities against the political activity of the clergy.

divide the Catholic forces, and furnish very efficacious aid to the enemies of the Church, who teach the same errors, though with greater display and impudence, and insensibly lead men's minds to accept their perverse designs." This was held to constitute papal approval of the joint letter of 1875, and of all the menace, coercion, and intimidation practised under authority of that document; to set at defiance the assertion by the Canadian courts of the power of the law and the supremacy of the State; and to justify the unrelenting warfare of the Catholic ecclesiastics upon one of the great political organizations of Canada.

There was quoted from Sir Alexander Galt's pamphlet a reference to the position of Archbishop Lynch of Ontario. His attitude was in striking contrast to that of the ecclesiastical authorities of Quebec, and though vigorously condemned by the Ultramontanes, his utterance probably had a considerable effect in dampening the fires of religious animosity in the English provinces. On January 20th, 1876, he said in a letter to Mr. Mackenzie: "I think this an opportune time to inform you and your Government that priests in our arch-diocese are strictly forbidden to make the altar or pulpit of their churches the tribune of political harangues for or against any party or candidate for election, or to threaten any spiritual disability for voting with either party." The Prime Minister, in his reply said it was a fortunate

circumstance that the form of the Canadian Constitution rendered it difficult if not impossible to bring questions of religion into the political arena where the subjects proper for debate were purely secular, and where, consequently, men of opposite religious views found no difficulty whatever in uniting in the conduct of public affairs.

It is not so clear as Mr. Mackenzie seemed to think, that "the form of the Canadian Constitution" has made it exceptionally difficult to bring questions of religion into the political arena. Such issues seem to be eternally present in our political contests, and more than once the battle has raged about the form, the spirit, and the intention of the Constitution. But at least it is easy to accept the admirable definition of Liberalism which Mr. Mackenzie set out in the concluding sentences of his letter to the archbishop: "The general principles," he said, "of the party of which I am the leader, are well known and thoroughly settled. They include the independence of Church and State; the amplest recognition of civil as well as religious liberty; and the accordance of impartial justice and equal rights to every individual, irrespective of his religious creed or his political faith." To these principles rather than to the "form of the Constitution" must we look for religious peace, and for the harmonious co-operation of all races and creeds in Canada.

The clerical opponents of the Liberal party, in

defiance of the judgments of the Courts, persisted in the policy of intimidation and coercion. In November, 1876, Mr. Laflamme became Minister of Justice in the Mackenzie Government, and a new election in Jacques Cartier became necessary. Mr. Laflamme was an uncompromising *Rouge*. He had been connected with the *Institut Canadien*, and had always resisted the extreme pretensions of the Ultramontanes. He was, therefore, an inviting subject for attack. On the Sunday before the polling, the curé of L'Isle Bizard told his people that if they did not listen to the word of God through him they would be damned. He asked his congregation to remember that there had been two sudden deaths in the parish during the week, and to consider whether or not these people were prepared for judgment. "You," he said, "may also die suddenly, and are you going to prepare yourselves to meet your God, your sovereign Judge, by voting for the enemies of His Church." There were similar utterances in other parishes and in other constituencies as elections occurred, and, in fact, there was a general and determined adherence to the policy of clerical interference with the candidates of the Liberal party. Again appeals were made to Rome by Liberal Catholics; and finally Mgr. Conroy, Bishop of Armagh, was instructed by the Congregation of the Propaganda to proceed forthwith to Canada, and pronounce upon the attitude of the Canadian clergy. He made a thorough investigation into

the conditions in Quebec, and pronounced a definite condemnation of the clerical antagonists of the Liberal party. He proclaimed that the two political parties were equal before the Church, and, acting under his instructions, the bishops on October 11th, 1877, issued a joint pastoral in which they said: "The decree of the fourth council of Quebec implicitly forbids you to teach in the pulpit or elsewhere that it is a sin to vote for such a candidate or such a political party; much more are you forbidden to announce that you will refuse the sacraments for this reason. From the pulpit you will never give your personal opinion."

But notwithstanding even the instructions of the apostolic delegate and the joint pastoral of the bishops, many priests were active in the general election of 1878, and ecclesiastical censure and intimidation were freely employed against Liberal candidates. In Berthier, particularly, the clerical politicians set authority and prudence alike at defiance. The Liberal candidate was a sound Catholic and an excellent citizen, and from every standpoint the audacious interference of the clergy was without excuse or justification. Nothing could be more painful to Liberal Catholics than appeal to the civil power against their spiritual superiors. It required courage of a high order openly to charge and openly to establish the unclerical practices and unconstitutional assumptions of the priests, and all who engaged in such proceedings were

doubly exposed to the censures and anathemas of the ecclesiastics. But these sturdy French Liberals determined, while holding their faith inviolate, not to submit to clerical dictation nor to accept a less measure of political freedom than their Protestant fellow citizens enjoyed. They therefore protested the election on the ground of undue influence, and, as in Charlevoix, successfully established their contention before the judges.

It was shown that out of six curés of the parishes comprising the County of Berthier, five had used both the pulpit and the confessional in order to influence the electors against the Liberal candidate. They denounced the Liberal party as dangerous, anti-Catholic, and condemned by the Church; and told the electors that to vote for the Liberal candidate would be to endanger their salvation and to invite the refusal of the sacraments. One witness testified that a priest had said from the pulpit that out of thirteen or fourteen hundred communicants only five or six hundred were worthy of approaching the holy table. "If the head of the family has voted for the Liberals, the wife and children, like the head, are unworthy of coming to it." Another witness, whose son was temporarily deranged, went to his priest for spiritual counsel, and was told that he had always been a Liberal, and therefore always disobedient, and that in order to obtain the healing of Providence he must make a sacrifice and vote Conservative, as well as increase his contribu-

tions to the Church. A third witness swore that he was not permitted to make his Easter communion, because he persisted in voting for the Liberal candidate. Still another elector was told by his curé: "If you want to go to hell you have a fine chance. Go and vote on the Liberal side." Liberals were denounced as the children of the devil and the children of the demon. One curé said in the course of his sermon that "the Liberal party was the party that resembled the fire of hell in colour." A witness said that after his confession the priest told him to go to hell with his party. Another testified that the priest "told us that the Liberal party was a party condemned by the Church, and he compared the Liberals to eggs that were put under a hen to be hatched, when the chicks did not come out of the shell. He said that they were like addled eggs, and had a rotten heart." A Catholic writer has said: "A sincere Catholic, jealous of the honour of his religion and of his rights as a citizen, cannot read the brochure which contains the facts proved in this case, without being profoundly humiliated."[1]

These revelations brought from Rome an emphatic and energetic remonstrance expressed in language which could not be misunderstood. The Sacred Congregation of the Propaganda, over the signature of Jean, Cardinal Simeoni, declared that

[1] Mr. L. O. David's pamphlet on "The Canadian Clergy, their Mission and their Work." Page 47.

it had come to their knowledge that in the Province of Quebec certain members of the clergy and of the lay body were continually interfering too much in political elections, and were using to this end, in some cases the pulpit, in others the newspapers and other publications. It was necessary that the bishops of Canada should be made to understand that the Holy See recognized perfectly the extreme gravity of the facts reported, and that the injury which the authority of the clergy and the holy ministry was suffering in consequence was particularly to be deplored. In order to repair such signal damage, it was especially necessary to extirpate the root of it. The cause of such grave inconveniences was to be found in the divisions of the bishops between themselves, not so much on the subject of political matters, as on the subject of other matters which were being agitated at the moment in Canada. In order to put an end to these very regrettable dissensions, it would be necessary that the bishops, by common consent with the Apostolic Delegate despatched to Canada, should come to an understanding in order to determine a common line of action to be followed by each and all of them in regard to the political parties. Another cause of the same inconveniences was to be found in the too great interference of the clergy in political affairs without having sufficient regard for pastoral discretion. The remedy adapted to this excess of zeal was to recall to these bishops what had already

been recommended to them by the Supreme Congregation on Wednesday, July 29th, 1874, namely, that on the occasion of political elections they conform themselves, in their advice to the electors, to that which was laid down in the provincial council of 1868. It would be necessary to add that the Church, in condemning Liberalism, did not intend to strike each and every political party which happened to be called Liberal, since the decisions of the Church related to certain errors opposed to the Catholic doctrine, and not to a certain political party, no matter how constituted; and that, consequently, those did wrong who, without other foundation, declared one of the political parties of Canada to be condemned by the Church, the party, namely, called "Reform," a party warmly supported formerly by some of the bishops even. It would be necessary also to exhort the bishops to observe in relation to political affairs the greatest reserve, paying especial regard to the danger which existed of provoking to a violent war against the Church, the Protestants, who were already restless and irritated against the clergy under pretense of undue interference in political elections. Further, it was necessary to make provision that the clergy should always avoid naming any persons in the pulpit, all the more so if it were to discredit them on the occasion of the elections; and should not use the ministry of the Church for particular ends, unless when the candidates

might become hurtful to the true interests of the Church.

Mr. L. O. David, in his pamphlet on "The Canadian Clergy, their Mission and their Work," which was issued in 1896, and was put under condemnation by the Sacred Congregation of the Index at Rome, has said: "It was time for Rome to speak, for a large number of priests, and even some bishops, were accused of being stricken more or less by the terrible evil, Liberal Catholicism. In the bitter discussion aroused by the division of parishes, the Catholic Programme, and the establishment of a branch of Laval University at Montreal, the Conservatives were divided, and finished by mutually accusing themselves of being Liberal Catholics. If Rome had not interfered, all the clergy would have passed over, and there would have been in this country nothing but suspected Catholics. Conservative papers were then seen to claim the right of differing in opinion with their bishops in writings of a violence which Liberals never equalled. When the Conservatives were gently opposed by the clergy, they replied with a vigour which clearly demonstrated that the day on which they would be denounced and ostracized like the Liberals, they would lose no time in forcing Rome to interfere in order to impose silence and abstention on the clergy in political matters."

One of the most remarkable incidents of this period was the publication of a pamphlet called

"*La Source du Mal.*"[1] Undoubtedly of Ultramontane origin, its authorship has not been positively identified. It was, however, too frank even for the Ultramontanes, and was speedily suppressed. It is interesting, however, as revealing in bald and even vehement language, the intolerant spirit and the aggressive ends of Ultramontane policy. The pamphlet declares that: "All those who are at the head of the Liberal party in the Province of Quebec work with a persistent energy for the destruction of Catholicism. They want the separation of Church and State, and even assert the supremacy of the State; they sow everywhere distrust of the clergy, whom they represent as greedy for wealth and power; they maintain that law, when expressed by the will of the majority, is just and binding, even when in direct contradiction to ecclesiastical law; they deny to the Church and to the Pope the right to interfere in political questions; they claim the liberty of conscience, liberty of the press, and the liberty of doing everything in political matters; they work with all their might, whilst apparently acting in concert with the bishops, when appointed members of the Board of Education by persons disposed to secularize education; and they have already attained grand success in that direction." These "impious Liberals" were kept at bay by the Conservatives, who were generally well-disposed, although tainted with Gallicanism and false notions

[1] This pamphlet, "The Source of Evil," appeared in 1882.

by reason of their defective education. "In our Parliamentary debates and struggles, Lower Canada would always have paralyzed the efforts of Protestant fanaticism and Upper Canada Orangeism, if all our French-Canadian representatives had been united to defend our true interests." But the Liberals, numerous enough in Parliament, had "constantly sided with our bitterest enemies." The clergy, however, continued to exercise a paramount influence on the people, and determined to enlighten the faithful and put them on their guard against those who claimed their suffrages in the name of Liberal ideas. "To annihilate the efforts of this terrible enemy, the Liberals worked with incredible energy and perseverance to bring Archbishop Taschereau to separate from his suffragans the other bishops." In this they succeeded because the archbishop was "anxious to save his popularity and be agreeable to his family, filled with Liberal ideas." He served the Liberals admirably by his circulars. Catholic Liberals claimed that they were unjustly judged as to their political alliances in Ontario. But, the pamphlet proceeded: "What we exact is that our representatives should ally themselves with those of Ontario who are most favourable to all our true interests, and particularly to our religious interests, and this is what the Conservatives have proved themselves to be. The Liberals have proved themselves to be quite the opposite." The doctrine of liberty of conscience and of the absolute authority

of the State was proclaimed. By virtue of this principle, three political elections, Gaspé, Charlevoix, and Berthier, were annulled. This doctrine had been applied by three judges, two of whom were Catholics. They had held that they were bound to decide according to the law of the land, and to acknowledge no other law; and Mgr. Taschereau, in whose diocese "these horrors were enunciated," had allowed all this to pass unheeded. The free judgment of Protestantism had penetrated by the door which the so-called political Liberalism had opened.

Censure was pronounced upon the Gallican Seminary of Quebec and the liberal teachings of Laval University. Mr. Justice Taschereau, a brother of the Archbishop of Quebec, in reversing the judgment of Judge Routhier in the Charlevoix election, had "enunciated the most false and impious propositions." He had asserted that instructions given by the priest in the pulpit could really constitute undue influence, and had even gone so far as to say that the law of the land was the only rule for the courts in public matters. Mgr. Conroy "seems to have made every effort to destroy all that Pius IX. had stated in his allocutions and decrees on the subject of Liberalism and particularly Catholic Liberalism." He had pretended that one could vote for a Catholic Liberal and even for a downright infidel. Such a person was Mr. Rodolphe Laflamme, for whom Bishop Conroy had absolutely declared that it was allowable to vote. He had

added that "Mr. Mackenzie, Prime Minister in the federal Government of 1877, supported by our Liberals, was equal to Sir John Macdonald supported by the Ultramontanes." But there was a great difference, and here was the proof: "Whenever Sir John Macdonald was the head of the Government, he called as Ministers to support him from the Province of Quebec, the most sincere and devoted Catholics, and whenever it was in his power he yielded to the Catholics in every question where they had an interest."[1] Hence it was concluded that the visit of Mgr. Conroy to Canada was a great misfortune. "His mission has made us retrograde immensely in the path of true progress." He had prepared horrible disasters which would befall in a short time if Providence did not come to the rescue. Finally it was insisted that the Holy See must interfere; that the Liberal errors pointed out by Pius IX. must be condemned for Canada; that the principles of Christian reform in education

[1] "Honest Conservatives will admit that there is no brighter and more redeeming feature in the political history of this country than the spectacle of the *Rouge* party struggling for years in a hopeless minority for the prevalence of a great political principle which had prevailed in France and England a hundred years ago; struggling for the enfranchisement of the people against the prejudice of the people themselves; against the temporal and spiritual weapons of the most powerful of ecclesiastical institutions, allied as the Church always has been in a most unnatural alliance with the English Protestant Conservative vote, which has enabled it to perpetuate the enslavement of the people. The British population cannot look back with anything of pride on the part it has played in the politics of this province. . . . The finger of scorn was pointed at every French Liberal at every parish

must be maintained; that religious authority must be affirmed more particularly with respect to the visitation of the schools and the right to use in schools only such books as the religious authority approved; that the civil authority must be declared inferior and subject to the ecclesiastical; and the property formerly belonging to the Jesuits restored to the legitimate owners, and Montreal permitted to have its university so that it could organize it on a Catholic basis.

In the subsequent history of Quebec but few of these pretensions have prevailed. It may be that the Gallican principle has declined, and it is true that the Jesuits have secured compensation for their confiscated estates. But the civil authority has not been subordinated to the ecclesiastical, spiritual intimidation in elections has obtained no legal sanction, education is less subject to clerical control, political Liberalism has waxed strong, and the long and resolute attempt to establish an Ultramontane university at Montreal has ended in a triumph for Laval.

church when he came to mass, and the consequence was that many of them were driven out of the Church, and in their forced antagonism with the clergy were denounced as bad Catholics. These men were Liberals at a time when it required a very high order of moral courage in a French Canadian to avow himself a Liberal. Had it not been for clerical interference the title of *Rouge* would not have been a title of opprobrium, and men like Doutre would have remained good churchmen, and other able and conspicuous men would still have been eminent in public life, and still within the pale."—A. H. G. (a Quebec Liberal), in the Toronto *Mail*, May 23rd, 1888.

CHAPTER XII

POLITICAL LIBERALISM

ON June 26th, 1877, three months before he entered the Government, and at the height of the Ultramontane reaction, Mr. Laurier spoke at Quebec in explanation and defence of "Political Liberalism." Under all the circumstances, no more courageous, more powerful, or more admirably balanced deliverance has ever been made from the platform in Canada. He evaded nothing, neither set down aught in malice, nor shrank at any point from the legitimate conclusion of his argument. The address was delivered in the Academy of Music, and under the auspices of the *Club Canadien*, which was, although its title conveys no party significance, an organization of young, active, and aggressive French Liberals. The audience was one of the best that could be collected in the old French capital. A contemporary writer has said that "they came from all parts, from all districts, even from St. Hyacinthe and Montreal, to assist at this unique demonstration, and the spectacle was as imposing as it was instructive."[1] Two thousand persons were crowded into a hall which could

[1] From a political pamphlet of the day containing Mr. Laurier's address on Political Liberalism.

give comfortable accommodation to only twelve hundred. The main entrance, not less than twenty feet wide, had to be left open, and every foot of standing room on the steps, on the platform, and in the corridors was occupied.

Among Liberals there was profound anxiety for the successful issue of the event. It was felt that this performance might mar, even if it could not make the orator's career, and that the whole situation was hedged about with dangers and difficulties. He had to face the frowning front of the authorities of his Church, to respect the conservative instincts of the English-speaking people of his province, to consider the racial sensitiveness and religious feeling of the French Canadians, and to command the favourable judgment of the great body of Liberals throughout Canada. This was surely no light task, and the orator was manifestly conscious of the gravity of the occasion. He was deathly pale when he came upon the platform, and as he stood up he searched the faces of his audience with grave deliberation before he uttered a word. Slowly and impressively he spoke his first sentences, feeling for the temper of the meeting, and watching for the first symptoms of approval or dissent. Interest deepened in the faces of the multitude before him; passed into the steady glow of sympathy; kindled into enthusiasm, and broke into cheering. Then the pallor passed from his countenance. His rich voice rang

out full and strong. He went on triumphantly, the absolute master of his audience and of himself, and scored that night as signal a triumph as ever was won by a Canadian orator. There is courage in the speech, and argument, and eloquence, and literature. It reveals none of the tricks of the demagogue. It has nothing of party rancour, and nothing of pettiness. It exhibits no temper. It contains not one sentence that could be turned to the confusion of himself or his party, or employed to excite the meaner prejudices of any element of the population. Mr. Laurier is essentially an orator, and has achieved many later triumphs on the hustings and in Parliament, but it is doubtful if any other speech that he has made ranks above this that he pronounced at Quebec more than twenty-five years ago under such exceptionally delicate and difficult circumstances.

He faced the situation squarely at the outset. He said he did not deceive himself as to the position of the Liberal party in the Province of Quebec. He knew that it occupied a false position from the standpoint of public opinion. "I know," he said, "that in the eyes of a large number of my fellow-countrymen the Liberal party is a party composed of men of perverse doctrines and dangerous tendencies, pressing knowingly and deliberately towards revolution. I know that in the eyes of a portion of my fellow-countrymen the Liberal party is a party of men with upright intentions, perhaps,

but victims and dupes of principles which are leading them unconsciously but fatally towards revolution. In fine, I know that in the eyes of another and not the least considerable portion, perhaps, of our people, Liberalism is a new form of evil, a heresy carrying with it its own condemnation."

The Liberal party, he said, had been more assailed than any other political party in the history of the country. Prejudices had been raised like a barrier between Liberals and public opinion. By one class of their opponents they had been calumniated in good faith; by another class they had been systematically slandered. The first duty of Liberals was to rally to their side all the friends of liberty who, before 1837 or after, had fought for responsible government, and who, when popular government was established, had been detached from the party through representations that the realization of Liberal ideas would lead to the destruction of the government thus established. The second point was to force the enemies of the Liberal party, who were at bottom enemies, more or less disguised, of liberty, to abandon their appeals to prejudices and fear, and come frankly before the people with their own ideas and acts.

All the charges made against the Liberal party could be crystallized into two propositions: (1) Liberalism is a new form of error, a heresy already virtually condemned by the head of the Church; (2) a Catholic cannot be a Liberal. He knew that

Catholic Liberalism had been condemned by the head of the Church, but he insisted that Catholic Liberalism was not political Liberalism. "If it were true," he said, "that the ecclesiastical censures hurled against Catholic Liberalism should also apply to political Liberalism, this fact would constitute for us, French by origin and Catholics by religion, a state of things the consequences of which would be as strange as they would be painful." Under the Constitution, the French Canadians had not more rights or more privileges, but they had as many rights and as many privileges as the other elements which go to make up the Canadian family. The other elements of the population were divided into the Liberal party and the Conservative party. With convincing logic he proceeded: "If we who are Catholics are not to have the right to have our preferences, if we are not to have the right to belong to the Liberal party, one of two things must happen: either we would be obliged to abstain completely from taking any share in the management of the affairs of the State, and then the Constitution, that Constitution which was granted to us for our own protection, would be in our hands only a dead letter; or we would be obliged to take a part in the management of the affairs of the State under the direction and to the profit of the Conservative party, and then, our action being no longer free, the Constitution would again be in our hands a dead letter, and

we would, in addition, have the ignominy of being regarded by the other members of the Canadian family composing the Conservative party as tools and slaves."

He argued that the Liberal idea was as old as the world, and was written on every page of the world's history. But it was only in our day, under representative institutions, that we had come to know its force and its law, and understand how to utilize it. "The system of representative government is the instrument which has revealed to the world the two principles, Liberal and Conservative, and by which we get from that form of government all its effects." Both Liberalism and Conservatism were susceptible of much good, as also of much evil. "The Conservative who defends his country's old institutions may do much good, as he also may do much evil if he be obstinate in maintaining abuses which have become intolerable. The Liberal who contends against these abuses, and who after long effort succeeds in extirpating them, may be a public benefactor, just as the Liberal who lays a rash hand on hallowed institutions may be a scourge, not only for his own country, but for humanity at large." He went on to say that "the principle of Liberalism is inherent in the very essence of our nature, in that desire of happiness with which we are all born into the world, which pursues us throughout life, and which is never completely gratified on this side of the grave. Our souls are immortal but our means

are limited. We constantly gravitate towards an ideal which we never attain. We dream of good, but we never realize the best. We reach the goal we have proposed to ourselves only to discover new horizons opening up which we had not before even suspected. We rush on towards them, and those horizons, explored in their turn, reveal to us others, which lead us on ever further and further. And thus it will be as long as man is what he is, as long as the immortal soul inhabits a mortal body; his desires will be always vaster than his means, and his actions will never rise to the height of his conceptions. He is the real Sisyphus of the fable; his work, always finished, has always to be begun again."

He spoke with enthusiasm of the reforms achieved and the abuses corrected by the Liberal party of Great Britain, without shock, disturbance, or violence. "What," he said, "is grander than the history of the great English Liberal party during the present century. On its threshold looms up the figure of Fox, the wise, the generous Fox, espousing the cause of the oppressed. A little later comes O'Connell, claiming and obtaining for his co-religionists the rights and privileges of English subjects. He is helped in this work by all the Liberals of the three kingdoms, Grey, Brougham, Russell, Jeffrey, and a host of others. Then come, one after the other, the abolition of the ruling oligarchy, the repeal of the Corn Laws, the extension of the

suffrage to the working classes, and lastly, to crown the whole, the disestablishment of the Church of England as the state religion in Ireland. And note well: the Liberals who carried out these successive reforms were not recruited from the middle classes only, but some of their most eminent leaders were recruited from the peerage of England. I know of no spectacle that reflects greater honour on humanity than the spectacle of these peers of England, these rich and powerful nobles, stubbornly fighting to eradicate a host of venerable abuses, and sacrificing their privileges with calm enthusiasm to make life easier and happier for a larger number of their fellow-beings." He quoted Macaulay's breathless and exultant account of the passage of the first Reform Bill in the British Parliament, and exclaimed: "Members of the *Club Canadien*, Liberals of the Province of Quebec, there are our models, there are our principles, there is our party!"

He passed on to say that the constitutional Liberals of Great Britain had neither sympathy nor fellowship with the revolutionaries of France, Italy, and Germany, who aimed at the destruction of modern society. He protested against the persevering attempts of the opponents of the Liberal party in Quebec to identify Canadian Liberals with the revolutionary elements of Europe. He pointed out that down to 1848 the great mass of French Canadians were embraced within the Liberal party, and that the Tory party represented but a feeble min-

ority of the people. Lafontaine accepted the régime established in 1841. But when Papineau returned from exile he assailed the new order; and many young men of great talent and greater impetuosity of character, disappointed that they had come on the scene too late to stake their heads during the events of 1837, and among the foremost of Lafontaine's partisans in the struggle against Lord Metcalf, accepted the policy of Papineau, and soon went beyond their leader. They attacked the social as well as the political situation, and issued a programme of twenty-one articles, beginning with election of justices of the peace, and ending with annexation to the United States. The platform as a whole amounted to a revolution. The only excuse for these Liberals, he said, was their youth. The oldest of them was not more than twenty-two years of age. Besides, the situation in Canada and in Europe was favourable to such exaggerations, and these young enthusiasts, not content with the ambition to revolutionize their own country, greeted with transports each fresh revolution in the old world. They, however, had hardly taken two steps in life when they perceived their immense error, abandoned their organ *L'Avenir* to the demagogues, and sought in a new journal, *Le Pays*, with only partial success, the new path which should be taken by the friends of liberty under the new constitution. But, he said, "the harm was done. The clergy, alarmed at these proceedings

which reminded them of the revolutionaries of Europe, at once declared merciless war on the new party. The English population, friendly to liberty, but also friendly to the maintenance of order, likewise ranged themselves against the new party, and during twenty-five years that party has remained in opposition, although to it belongs the honour of having taken the initiative in all the reforms accomplished during that period. It was in vain that it demanded and obtained the abolition of the seignorial tenure. It was in vain that it demanded and obtained judicial decentralization. It was in vain that it was the first to give an impetus to the work of colonization. It was not credited with these wise reforms. It was in vain that those children, now grown into men, disavowed the rashness of their youth. It was in vain that the Conservative party made mistake after mistake. The generation of the Liberals of 1848 had almost entirely disappeared from the political scene ere the dawn of a new day began to break for the Liberal party. Since that time the party has received new accessions; calmer and more thoughtful ideas have prevailed in it; and as for the old programme, nothing whatever remains of its social side, while on the political side there remain only the principles of the English Liberal party."

Mr. Laurier went on to show that in consequence of the split between Papineau and Lafontaine, the fraction of the Liberal party which followed La-

fontaine was finally absorbed by the Tory party of Upper Canada. The new party became the Liberal-Conservative party, and as the years passed fresh modifications ensued. Now some of its leaders would have the organization described as the Ultramontane or Catholic party. Its principles, like its name, had been modified. If Sir George Cartier were to come back to earth he would not know his party. Cartier was devoted to the principles of the British Constitution, while his successors rejected the principles of that Constitution as a concession to the spirit of evil. They understood neither their country nor their time. Their ideas were modelled on those of the reactionists of France. They sought to introduce ideas which were impossible of application in our state of society. "I accuse them of laboriously, and by misfortune too efficaciously, working to degrade religion to the simple proportions of a political party." It was, he said, the habit of the opponents of the Liberal party to accuse Liberals of irreligion, but for his part he had too much respect for the faith in which he was born ever to use it as the basis of a political organization. "You," he said, addressing the Conservative leaders in Quebec, "wish to organize a Catholic party. But have you not considered that if you have the misfortune to succeed, you will draw upon your country calamities of which it is impossible to foresee the consequences. You wish to organize all the Catholics into one party, without other bond, without

other basis, than a common religion. But have you not reflected that by this very fact you will organize the Protestant population as a single party, and that then, instead of the peace and harmony now prevailing between the different elements of the Canadian population, you throw open the doors to war, a religious war, the most terrible of all wars." Again, he said, he accused Conservatives of not understanding either their country or their time.

It was also charged against Liberals that they loved liberty, and the tenor of his argument implies that it was sought to give a sinister meaning to the word as associated with the revolutionary upheavals of France. But while the French have had the name of liberty, they have not yet, he contended, had liberty itself; and he quoted as his ideal of freedom those stately verses of Tennyson which describe England as "the land where, girt with friends or foes, a man may speak the thing he will," where "freedom slowly broadens down from precedent to precedent," where "faction seldom gathers head," and "the strength of some diffusive thought hath time and space to work and spread." But while Liberals were denounced as the friends of a dangerous liberty, it was also charged that they would deny to the Church the freedom to which it was entitled. It was not the fact, however, that Canadian Liberals desired to exclude the clergy from participation in political affairs. They had the right to approve or disapprove of public men and

their measures. They had the right even to say that if a particular candidate were elected, religion would be endangered or the interests of the State imperilled. But this right was not unlimited. "The right of interference in politics finishes at the spot where it encroaches on the elector's independence." It was legitimate to change the opinion of the voter by persuasion or by argument, but if these failed and his mind remained unchanged, and then by intimidation or fraud men were forced to vote against their convictions, "the opinion which they express is not their opinion, and the Constitution is violated." Under such circumstances we would have not the government of the majority but the government of the minority, and, "if after each election the will expressed is not the real will of the country, once more you do violence to the Constitution, responsible government is no longer anything but an empty name, and, sooner or later, here as elsewhere, the pressure will culminate in explosion, violence, and ruin."

He knew there were persons who held that the clergy had the right to dictate to the people, but his answer was that we were here under the government of the Queen of England, and "under the authority of a Constitution which was granted to us as an act of justice," and the exercise of such authority was incompatible with the spirit of that Constitution. He was reared among priests, and among them he had some sincere friends, and to

these at least he could say: "See if there is under the sun a happier country than ours; see if there is under the sun a country where the Catholic Church is freer or more privileged than it is here. Why then should you, by claiming rights incompatible with our state of society, expose this country to agitations, of which it is impossible to foresee the consequences." He said, in closing, that we in Canada were a free and happy people owing to the liberal institutions by which we were governed, and the policy of the Liberal party was to protect and spread those institutions and under their sway to develop the country's latent resources. "Forty years ago the country was in a state of feverish commotion, a prey to an agitation which a few months later broke out in rebellion. The British Crown was maintained in the country only by the force of powder and ball. And yet what were our predecessors seeking? They were asking for nothing more than the institutions which we have at present. Those institutions were granted to us and loyally applied, and see the result. The British flag floats over the old citadel of Quebec; it floats to-night over our heads, without a single English soldier in the country to defend it; its sole defence resting in the gratitude which we owe it for our freedom and the security which we have found under its folds."

Such a speech, frank, persuasive, luminous, and eloquent, could not fail to make a profound impres-

sion throughout the country, and particularly to strike the imagination of the French Canadian people to whom it was chiefly addressed. While Mr. Laurier laboured to remove false impressions, to separate the Liberal party from the errors and excesses of the past, to establish its constitutional character and constitutional purposes, he still declared uncompromising resistance to the arrogant assumptions of the Ultramontanes, and boldly affirmed the right of the Catholic elector to control his own franchise, rest in his own judgment, and exercise all the freedom and authority of independent citizenship. Here he struck at the very root of clerical pretension, and calmly confronted influences before which even Cartier had succumbed, and which all men deemed invincible in the Province of Quebec. Here was the vital fact of the speech, and here the great merit of the performance.

"It was," said a writer of the time, "a striking and vivid explanation of what are the true Liberal principles, so unknown, so distorted, so calumniated, and which it is vainly attempted to compare with the fatal lucubrations of European Liberalism." Apart, said this writer, from the striking ovation which his countrymen had tendered to Mr. Laurier, they owed him a debt of gratitude. "They must recognize that he has eased the public conscience of the terrible doctrines sought to be imposed upon it, and which are a total denial of every

constitutional principle; they are indebted to him for having opened a road and led the way, an inestimable boon for a people lost in doubt, and a prey to every uncertainty; they are indebted to him, in a word, for having recalled them to a love for Liberalism, the glorious and immortal feeling which has been the salvation of nations, and to which its enemies have rendered homage, in every age, by carrying out necessary reforms, and by acknowledging popular rights, against which they had long fought, but which are now inalienable."

He proceeded to say, with astonishing frankness, when it is remembered that education in Quebec was chiefly in the hands of clerical agencies, that for French Canadians the events of the 26th of June were a subject of pride and proud encouragement. "Till now we were thought unfit for a parliamentary career, and with too good cause, for our education has little in its nature to give us the necessary temperament. Our conduct, under political circumstances, discloses this want in our education, while our press is almost solely occupied with frivolous quarrels or personalities, and seems to ignore this fact. But inexperience must not be confounded with inaptitude; and French Canadians showed on that ever memorable evening, the 26th of June, that they could, as well as their fellow countrymen of English origin, understand the working and appreciate the importance of repre-

sentative institutions, when they are explained with the clearness, the luminous method, in the calm and eloquent argument, in a word, with the exactness which Mr. Laurier displayed throughout his lecture." The speech, it was argued, must tend to free politics from all coteries, and from the contemptible meanness which was the daily bread of parties and which quarrelled over trifles for mere transitory satisfaction. "We now know the route we are following; it does not lead us to revolutionary excesses. Liberalism is divested of its savage garb, of its anti-social and anti-religious character, and is seen in its true colours, the love of lawful and necessary liberty, of progressive freedom, which results from the natural conditions of progress, and not from sudden shocks which dangerous spirits would wish to impart to it. Such are the characteristics of Canadian Liberalism which Mr. Laurier has pointed out, and which we will endeavour in future to retain."[1]

The clerical and Conservative organs energetically combatted Mr. Laurier's arguments, and especially assailed his contention that the pretensions of the Ultramontanes were inadmissible under the Canadian Constitution, and incompatible with the conditions of society which must obtain in a free country. *Le Nouveau Monde* attacked the speech as setting bounds to the liberty and authority of

[1] From a political pamphlet of the day containing Mr. Laurier's address on "Political Liberalism."

the Church. It said that the revolutionary Liberals of Europe had invented criminal spiritual influence which was visited with prison and exile, and now Mr. Laurier had invented undue spiritual influence which was visited with fines and civil degradation. Mr. Laurier, *Le Nouveau Monde* explained, was not held to be a Liberal Catholic because of his attitude on the tariff or on the Canadian Pacific Railway, but because formerly in *Le Défricheur*, and now in this address, he had endeavoured to give to the State the right of defining the limits of Catholic preaching, and thereby placed the State above the Church. For these reasons he deserved to be called a Liberal Catholic, and to be opposed as such.

Le Courrier de St. Hyacinthe contended that the doctrine proclaimed by Mr. Laurier was the very same doctrine expressed by the judges of the Supreme Court in the controverted election of Charlevoix. Like the judges, he placed the supremacy of Parliament above the liberty of the Catholic Church. It pointed out that the bishops of the province, who were the natural custodians of Catholic doctrine, in a collective letter, had unanimously protested against the judgment of the Supreme Court, and especially condemned the argument of Mr. Justice Taschereau. Mr. Laurier was not ignorant of the action of the episcopal body, yet ventured to appear as an antagonist of the liberty of the Church, and to accept false in-

terpretations of the Treaty of Paris, which secured to Catholics in Quebec the free exercise of their religion. He, in fact, placed the authority of the Queen, or of the Constitution, above the immutable and imperishable rights of the Church, and the civil society above the religious society. He had therefore damaged himself and the party to which he belonged. This journal particularly objected to Mr. Laurier's protest against the design to organize a Catholic party, and said: "This sentence, from the lips of a leader of a party, is very imprudent. How now, Mr. Laurier, entrusted as you were with a mission, with a task, by a large class of your countrymen, of asserting their principles, when you are called upon to explain the position of your party and meet the accusations of irreligion and of Catholic Liberalism made against it, can you have the audacity to reproach your adversaries with claiming their full rights as Catholics in the person of the priest?"

L'Union des Cantons de L'Est said that Mr. Laurier's speech was nothing less than a lesson to the bishops. He had dared to say that the right of dictating to the people at elections, claimed by the whole episcopal body and secured by treaties, was incompatible with our state of society. He had refused to rise in Parliament and make himself the interpreter of the bishops. He had the courage to fear the Protestants. He had the courage to think himself superior to the bishops, and to say so.

He had the courage to tell the bishops that their course was calculated to provoke agitations and expose the country to consequences impossible to foretell. *Le Canadien* said it was just such a speech as opponents of the Liberal party wanted, but dared not hope for. It was the expression of the ideas of the Liberal party, and the speaker had dealt squarely with the subject. The gist of the speech was that the clergy should remain in the sanctuary, and that religion should not form the basis of any party. While ostensibly a plea in defence of Liberalism, it was a denunciation of Ultramontanism and of the authority of the clergy. The orator's purpose was to impress upon Protestants that the Conservative party was led by men who were under such subjection to the Pope that they could not respect the British Constitution. He, in fact, affirmed that they were the enemies of the Constitution. "Mr. Laurier we have long known to hold opinions completely radical. His lecture places him incontestably at the head of the Liberals who are anxious to go ahead. He acknowledged that he believes the time has come to walk fearlessly and with flying banners."

The Liberal press, however, received the speech with enthusiasm, and the French organs of the party stood out as boldly in defence of his utterances and in acceptance of his programme as the English journals which were naturally expected to welcome and commend the deliverance. *L'Union de St. Hyacinthe*

described the speech as a masterpiece, and held that it was as remarkable for the depth and moderation of the ideas developed as for the polite and calm tone in which they were expressed. "This document," said *L'Union*, "is a manifesto for our party; it is the reaffirmation of principles which were forgotten; it is a new plan of a well-known field, the witness of many battles, but from which in the heat of the fight we had temporarily strayed away. Let us return to it; this plan is the salvation of the party, and will still lead us on to important conquests." *L'Évènement* said Mr. Laurier had made known the policy of the Liberal party in all its truth and candour. He had pointed out its tendencies and its real object. The party recognized its obligation to him, and was proud to have at its head a man of so much talent. Quoting from one of the Conservative journals the statement that it was desirable to organize a Catholic party and assemble all the Catholics under one banner, as they would thus be more numerous than by a mere union of French Canadians alone, *L'Évènement* proceeded: "Such a thought, at a time when Catholics enjoy a free measure of liberty, is a dangerous and vicious thought. The wish to divide Canada into two religious parties, Catholic and Protestant, would infallibly lead to terrible conflicts, in which we would undoubtedly be crushed, and in which we would lose forever the rights and privileges which it has cost us so much to obtain. This one declaration

of the Conservative idea is sufficient to bring about its condemnation. Let the Conservatives leave to Europe this religious hate, and let them work for the future greatness of our country, free from all religious discord."[1] *Le National* discussed at length the general attitude of the Liberal party towards the Catholic Church, and contended that the historical facts alone, even without Mr. Laurier's brilliant logic, should be enough to convince every honest and unprejudiced mind that the Reform party did not in any way desire to deprive the Church of its rights, but on the contrary had always endeavoured to secure to it the full exercise thereof. Mr. Laurier had unmasked the enemies' batteries, and the hypocrites who usurped the name of Conservatives had been irrevocably driven from one of their strongest positions.

The Montreal *Herald* characterized the speech as a masterpiece of diction. The young member for Drummond and Arthabaska, said *The Herald*, had already made for himself a national reputation as an orator, and anything that he might say either in English or in his mother tongue was sure to be said in a manner which left nothing to be desired. In this case he had fairly surpassed himself, and his exposition of the origin, progress, and aim of Liberalism in Canada, and his exposure of the hypo-

[1] The statement which *L'Évènement* attacked appeared in *Le Courrier de St. Hyacinthe*, edited by P. B. de la Bruyère, always an earnest Ultramontane, and now, as for many years past, superintendent of Catholic education in Quebec.

critical pretensions of its adversaries, formed one of the brightest chapters in the political literature of the day. The originality with which he treated the subject, the logic with which he reasoned out his course, and the strength of the positions which he occupied, all combined to make the speech one of the most forcible pleas for Liberalism ever advanced. The men who controlled the destinies of the Conservative party in Quebec relied for their support not upon the enlightening of the people, so that they might see clearly the course most beneficial to the country, but upon the intimidation of the electorate through clerical agents and the use of spiritual threats to prevent it from forming or expressing opinions. They had been strongly supported in their endeavour by the Ultramontane element in the Roman Catholic Church, and it was but natural that considerable effect had been produced upon the more ignorant portion of the population. Mr. Laurier had shown how utterly subversive to civil liberty were the doctrines of the Ultramontane school of politicians, how useless and valueless their general reception would render the Constitution, and how their promulgation was a menace to the safety and to the rights of all. The idea that a Catholic could not without renouncing his allegiance to his Church become a member of the Liberal party was, no doubt, one which if widely received would be of great advantage to Conservatives; but it was so utterly opposed to all

truth and reason that it was surprising, not only that there were people stupid enough to believe it, but that there were people sufficiently audacious to seek to inculcate it. The reactionary writers condescended to no arguments, but continually denounced Liberals in politics as communists, revolutionaries, freethinkers, the enemies of God and of man. No charge of revolution or of irreligion could be too hard to hurl against their adversaries. As a matter of fact, however, the Liberals of Canada had as little in common with the ideas of the communists of Paris as with those of the corrupt Bonapartists through whose misrule the *commune* had its being. They were the descendants of the great Whig party of England, and of the old Liberal party in Canada, through whose noble efforts and sacrifices constitutional government in England and in Canada was established. These very French Canadians who were so frantic in their denunciations of Liberalism were the men who would have seen their compatriots as a conquered people, with no share in their own government, had it not been for the brave and eventually successful struggle for constitutional government made by the Liberal party in years gone by. They would like now to establish a practical despotism in Canada, and to hand over the government to the Ultramontane priests and politicians. As Mr. Laurier had said, they understood neither the country nor the epoch in which they lived. "The safety of our institutions depends

upon the Liberal party, a party which is neither anti-religious nor anti-social as its adversaries pretend, which does not strive to increase its popularity by fanning the flames of sectional hatred, or arousing the prejudices of creed as do those adversaries themselves, but which advocates and maintains those principles of civil and religious freedom essential to our constitutional form of government."

The Montreal *Witness*, which had long waged a strenuous war against the Ultramontanes, and had stood always in the forefront of the battle for civil freedom, declared that a master mind had appeared upon the scene. The speech seemed likely to prove an event of no small magnitude in its influence upon political affairs in Quebec. It was many years since a French Canadian public man had given to the country a statesmanlike address on public affairs. The repressive influence of clericalism had for a long time discouraged and prevented any really honest and comprehensive treatment of those great political principles which underlie our system of government. Mr. Laurier had broken the monotony, and the results promised to be as wholesome as the event was novel. He was not afraid to call himself a Liberal. He seemed rather to glory in the name than otherwise; and the picture he gave of the achievements of the Liberal party on behalf of the people in England and in Canada ought to put new spirit into the backsliders

of his own party. It remained to be seen whether "the renegade section of the Liberal party" would renounce Mr. Laurier as too extreme and unpractical, or whether his noble and courageous stand would have the effect of inspiring them with some part of their lost manhood. *The Witness* continued: "It is the habit for the French Liberals of to-day to disown all sympathy with, or responsibility for, the policy of the young Liberals of 1848, who published the *Avenir*, and later advocated their principles, considerably modified, in the *Pays*. Mr. Laurier has fallen into the habit, and in his reference to them we think he has scarcely done them justice. Admitted that some of their schemes, such as annual parliaments and annexation, were ill-judged and chimerical, the main features of their programme were indisputably just and patriotic, and in harmony with the principles of the English Liberal party. Secular education provided by the State for all children, and separation of Church and State, are doctrines of the leading English Liberals; they are doctrines of the Liberals in every country; and we have not the slightest doubt that they are held by every intelligent French Canadian Liberal in his *for intérieur*. The talented and earnest young patriots who openly advocated these doctrines thirty years ago, who founded *L'Institut Canadien* and other centres of light for their fellow countrymen, were as noble men as this province ever produced; but in face of the tremendous reaction

which has overwhelmed them, we are not surprised that even Mr. Laurier should have failed to do them justice."

With Mr. Laurier's general position, however, *The Witness* was well satisfied. He had made an unequivocal declaration against clerical intimidation in elections, and had warned the clergy that if they persisted in dictating to the people in political affairs, the result would be to deprive them of some of the privileges which were guaranteed them by the very Constitution they were striving to overthrow. The effect of the address had been to revive the spirits of the Liberals and to excite the Ultramontane press to greater violence of language than ever. The wise, calm, and generous declarations of Mr. Laurier were treated by the clericals as insults and defiance offered to the Church, and fresh appeals were made to Catholics to unite and put down the Liberal monster which was bent upon the destruction of everything sacred. The effect of these appeals upon the people of Quebec, *The Witness* argued, should convince the Liberals that the first and most urgent reform required was popular education. This was doubtless also Mr. Laurier's opinion. He had spoken to that effect in the provincial Legislature, and while the question did not come within the scope of his address at Quebec, there is ample evidence that he recognized as clearly as *The Witness* the necessity of an instructed democracy to the satisfactory and

profitable working of free institutions. The speech at Quebec, however, was designed, not to force a quarrel with the Catholic hierarchy, but to remove suspicions and overcome misunderstandings, and to assert broadly, but unequivocally, the right of the Catholic layman to free and independent citizenship under the Constitution. If he had cumbered the speech with many issues, and marked out lines of division for the future, he would have succeeded only in raising new foes in his path, and putting fresh weapons into the hands of his opponents. His purpose was, not to declare a political programme, but to illuminate and expose an actual situation, and clear the ground for the conflicts of the future.[1]

[1] The writer of "Current Events" in the *Canadian Monthly* for October, 1877, said: "The able speech of M. Laurier at Quebec is a landmark in the history of party; he is a young man not yet thirty-six years of age, but there are no signs of crudity or juvenility in his party manifesto. Tracing the history of those with whom he has acted, he marks with precision every stage of its development, and clearly defines the position they now occupy. The principles he lays down are such as no lover of civil and religious liberty, in an English sense of the phrase, can hesitate to sanction. The only issue upon which the electorate of Quebec is divided, is that of illegal influence by the clergy, and upon that M. Laurier gives no uncertain sound. He is above all things a friend of freedom, at once from State oppression and ecclesiastical encroachment. The gradual change in tone which has come over Liberalism in Quebec has been a result, partly of the mellowing influence of time, and partly of the reactionary policy of the Ultramontanes. In the one case, the alteration has been for the better; in the other, unmistakably for the worse. The Liberal party has emerged from the mists of revolutionary theory to the clear and steady light of British constitutionalism, whilst their opponents have

More than three hundred pages of the Hansard of 1878 are devoted to the debate on the Address, and much of the discussion centred on Mr. Laurier's speech at Quebec and the relations between the Catholic ecclesiastics and the Conservative party. A general election was imminent, and every question likely to disturb and excite the people was energetically canvassed by the warring parliamentarians. Mr. Masson attacked Mr. Laurier, but in discreet and guarded language. He did not venture in Parliament to adopt the tone of the clerical press, or to advance the extravagant claims of the Ultramontanes to supreme and final authority in civil affairs. He described Mr. Laurier as an honour

sunk deeper and deeper into the fetid and murky slough of absolutism. The cause of tyranny, political as well as ecclesiastical, is theirs, all the world over. To speak of but one instance, it may be fairly doubted whether the Count of Chambord can boast of as many supporters in France as are to be found in the Province of Quebec. From the time when M. Laurier delivered his lecture up to this moment, the newspaper war has been going on with increasing virulence on the part of the reactionary press. It is in vain, however, that the clerical press strives to expose the inconsistency of its opponents; whatever it may say, it is the inconsistency of progress and development, not that which creeps on in the downward course of decrepitude and decay—a step from youth to manhood, not a tottering descent on the slope towards the grave. The principles of Papineau are not those of modern Liberalism; yet, on the other hand, the views and policy of Lafontaine, and even of Cartier, were still more dissimilar to the Quebec Conservatism of to-day. It may be that the hierarchy will be able to force the elections there in its own interests; if so, it will at once cut off the province from political communion and sympathy with the rest of the Dominion, and possibly arouse once more the ill-omened spectre of fanatical bigotry."

to his party, and admitted that he had deserved to be elected in Drummond and Arthabaska, and probably would have been elected if he had not entered the Government. He, however, resented the young Minister's statement that the Conservatives of Quebec sought to create a Catholic party, and had cast away the principles of the British Constitution to which Cartier was devoted. He contended that he had always objected to politicians speaking of religion on the hustings. It was a disgrace to drag such a question into party controversy. The proper place to speak of religion was in the churches.[1] Mr. Laurier, however, adhered to the position he had taken at Quebec, and showed how utterly Mr. Masson's argument in Parliament was condemned by the Ultramontane press and the practices of his party in the constituencies. He insisted that for many years the policy of the Conservatives was to represent the Liberals of Quebec as a party of infidels and heretics. "The only battle ground upon which they ever attacked the Liberals before their constituents had been that ground and no other."[2] Mr. Laflamme, who could speak from longer experience and with equal authority, told Parliament that for many years the Conservative party of Quebec had made of every question a religious question. "Every political question was characterized on one side as a holy question;

[1] Hansard, February 11th, 1878, pages 45-46; 76.

[2] Hansard, February 11th, 1878, page 55.

and on the opposite side, those who contested it, who denied the truth of it, were put down as infidels and as people who had no other object in view but the subversion of everything that was sacred; and religion, order, and society were to be completely upset if the Liberal party were allowed to reach the treasury benches. This was the principle upon which the politics of the country in the Province of Quebec had been treated. There never was, to his knowledge, one contested election where there was a warm contest, but the clergy, and the papers which denominated themselves the organs of the clergy, declared that no man could vote conscientiously or without compromising his eternal salvation if he did not support the Conservatives."[1] But perhaps the most spirited and aggressive speech of the debate was made by Dr. Fréchette. He charged that for twenty-five years the Liberals of Quebec had had to answer on the hustings and in the press accusations and charges, not against their political creed, but against their religious convictions. Their opponents were always hidden "behind the altar and the priest," and yet they now came before Parliament, and in order to calm the alarm that might have been raised in the minds of Protestants by their fanaticism, said they never used religion as a political tool. He shocked the decorum of Parliament and angered his adversaries by declaring bluntly that the men

[1] Hansard, February 11th, 1878, page 73.

who uttered these denials were guilty of deliberate untruth.[1]

But the allies of the Ultramontanes were manifestly reluctant to defend their principles, or at least their practices, on the floor of Parliament. Their speeches are full of evasion and denial, and marked by a moderate and conciliatory temper, in striking contrast to the furious devotion to the Church and fervent exaltation of the ecclesiastical order which characterized the utterances of their press in Quebec, and distinguished the proceedings of their incendiary agents in the French constituencies.[2] Probably many of the Conservative members from Quebec, while willing to profit by clerical coercion were hardly more willing than the Liberals to uphold all the claims and sanction all the proceedings of the clergy, and so were content to make only such defence as was necessary to stay the growth of Protestant feeling in the English

[1] Hansard, February 15th, 1878, pages 263, 264.

[2] From 1854 to 1896 the Liberal party struggled in Quebec against most adverse circumstances. There were twelve English counties, and in four or five more the balance of power was held by the English, but 80 to 90 per cent. of the English voters were Tory. Against the Liberals were a powerful Administration and the most severe undue clerical influence. But, notwithstanding the combined influence of the English Tories and of the Ultramontanes, there were still fifteen or twenty Liberal counties in Quebec, and another fifteen to twenty counties lost by minorities ranging from 150 down to 20. So that, in spite of all these combinations, the two parties nearly divided the province. But in 1872 the Tories fell by their own corruption, and thereafter the Liberal gain was rational.—From an address by Senator Dandurand to the Reform Club of Montreal, December 30th, 1901.

provinces. Besides, the floor of a British Parliament is not an advantageous position from which to defend ecclesiastical usurpation and tyranny. Outside of Quebec this issue hardly entered into the general election. In so far as it was a factor in the contest the Liberal party was adversely affected. Those whose chief business in politics was to maintain ecclesiastical ascendancy could be trusted to sacrifice all other considerations to that idea; but for the masses of the people in all great political contests one question alone absorbs attention. This question in the election of 1878 was the tariff; and no one in the English provinces who desired to vote for protection, however strong his theoretical devotion to the principles of civil and religious liberty, or however irreconcilably opposed to the claims and encroachments of Ultramontanism, was likely to sink his preferences on the dominant issue in order to express condemnation of the conduct of the clerical allies of the protectionist leaders in Quebec.

CHAPTER XIII

IN OPPOSITION

NOW comes a long day of adversity for the Liberal party of Canada. On October 9th, 1878, Mr. Mackenzie and his colleagues resigned office, and the head of the first Liberal ministry under Confederation had passed to his honoured grave long before his party was enabled to regain the confidence of the people. As some one has aptly quoted, "neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us." But while for successive elections the Liberal party was to know unbroken defeat, it never became a mere political remnant, nor ever degenerated into a faction. It was always a powerful, aggressive, and thoroughly energized political organization; and during all the long period of its exclusion from office, the record is distinguished for patriotic endeavour and fruitful service to the commonwealth. No doubt the story has its errors and its blemishes, reveals occasional false steps, and covers seasons alike of exaggerated gloom and of fretful impatience. But the party always stood for a distinct and intelligible programme; and in the long and stubborn conflict to determine under the Constitution the due distribution of powers between the local

and the federal authorities, these years of opposition witnessed a signal triumph of Liberal contentions and a signal vindication of Liberal principles. The great events which mark the period between Mr. Mackenzie's resignation of office and Mr. Laurier's election to the leadership of the Liberal party were the establishment of the system of protection, the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway, the settlement of the north-western boundary of Ontario, the successful assertion of provincial authority over the issue of liquor licenses, the redistribution of constituencies in 1882, the adoption of the federal Franchise Act, the elimination by purchase of the monopoly provisions of the Canadian Pacific Railway charter, the North-West rebellion, and the negotiation of the abortive Fisheries Treaty between Canada and the United States. Many of these questions were of the first importance; and the political leaders who held office during this great creative and formative period, could not fail to leave an enduring impress upon Canadian history, fashion the character of many Canadian institutions, and appreciably affect the thought and spirit of the Canadian people.

One question which arose under the Mackenzie Administration reappeared in the session of 1879. A few months before the fall of the Liberal ministry at Ottawa, Mr. Letellier de St. Just, Lieutenant-Governor of Quebec, had dismissed the local Conservative Administration mainly on the grounds

that the Quebec Ministers had shown contempt for his prerogative, had submitted measures to the Legislature without consulting the executive head, had appended his name to proclamations and other instruments without his knowledge, and generally had subjected him to unceremonious and contumelious treatment. Letellier had had an honourable career in the Legislature of united Canada, as well as in the new federal Parliament. Although the son of a private soldier, he had all the pride and spirit of the old *seigneurs*, combined with their social ease and chivalrous temperament, and just that exquisite sensitiveness which could not brook the studied contempt of his arbitrary and ungracious advisers. It was argued by many Conservatives that the federal Government was privy to the Lieutenant-Governor's proceedings against the provincial Ministers, and that his summary dismissal of his Cabinet was the culmination of a partisan plot to establish a Liberal Government in Quebec.[1] This, at least, has been successfully controverted. No one who examines the evidence furnished by Mr. Mackenzie's biographers

[1] "It is useless to deny that Mr. Letellier came to the administration with an exaggerated sense of his functions and powers; but what was worse still, he believed that he had, and he really did have, the countenance of the Mackenzie Ministry in his feeling and attitude toward his Cabinet, while he was egged on to hostilities by the rash counsels of George Brown and many other Upper Canada Reformers, as well as by the leading *Rouges* of his own province."—J. E. Collins, "Life and Times of Sir John Macdonald," page 423.

can doubt that Letellier acted on his own sole responsibility, and that Mr. Mackenzie questioned the wisdom, if he could not admit the unconstitutionality of the Lieutenant-Governor's conduct.[1] Mr. Joly succeeded to the Premiership of Quebec, formed a Ministry, and accepted full responsibility for Letellier's action. This at least the Constitution required, and nothing short of this could even seem to legitimize the Lieutenant-Governor's position.

However, on April 11th, 1878, Sir John Macdonald brought on a motion in the House of Commons declaring "that the recent dismissal by the Lieutenant-Governor of Quebec of his Ministers was, under the circumstances, unwise and subversive of the position accorded to the advisers of the Crown since the concession of the principle of responsible government to the British North American colonies." Mr. Laurier spoke on this motion, and argued substantially that while the will of the people must prevail, the Crown had its rights as well as the people. The best regulated state was that in which the rights of the Crown and the rights of the people were clearly defined and greatly respected. It was neither the duty nor the province of the central Parliament to criticize the conduct of Letellier. The adoption of the

[1] "The Hon. Alexander Mackenzie, His Life and Times," by William Buckingham, private secretary, and the Hon. George W. Ross, pages 478 to 485.

motion would be a direct invasion of the federal system. It was the federative system which gave to Quebec its autonomy, and the Dominion Government had no power to interfere with a question which affected the provincial constitution of Quebec alone. The people of Quebec had the remedy in their own hands. They could overthrow the present legal advisers of the Crown, and thereby effectually rebuke the Lieutenant-Governor. While it would be the duty of the Dominion Government to interfere in order to redress a wrong which the people could not themselves remedy, in this instance interference would be an invasion of the rights of the people of Quebec. Under all the circumstances, therefore, it was not for the federal Parliament to say whether the Lieutenant-Governor had acted judiciously or injudiciously, wisely or unwisely.[1]

It is manifest throughout the debate that the federal Ministers were reluctant to justify Letellier's extreme exercise of his prerogative, and that Sir John Macdonald was equally reluctant to declare the absolute unconstitutionality of the Governor's action. His motion of 1878 did not go beyond the declaration that Letellier's conduct was unwise and subversive of the position accorded to the advisers of the Crown under the system of responsible government, and although directly challenged by Mr. Mackenzie he refused to enlarge the

[1] Hansard, April 11th, 1878.

indictment. There is reason to think that Sir John Macdonald was not in absolute sympathy with the extreme policy of his Quebec allies, but was forced to bow to party exigencies, and consent against his own sounder judgment to the sacrifice of the Lieutenant-Governor.[1]

The motion submitted to Parliament in 1879 was in the exact language of that offered by Sir John Macdonald during the previous session; but in this instance it was moved by Mr. Mousseau, whose active identification with the local politics of Quebec gave a thoroughly partisan character to the incident. Sir John Macdonald did not speak during this debate, while a supporter of the Government moved the previous question in order to shut off amendments from the Liberal benches. In the meantime, a general election had been held in Quebec, and the Joly Government, which had assumed the responsibility for Mr. Letellier's dismissal of his former advisers was sustained by the narrow majority of one. It was a doubtful triumph; but at least the people of Quebec had not positively condemned Letellier, and had, therefore, refused to ask for the intervention of the federal authorities. It was, of course, impossible that the Joly Government could live many months under such circumstances, but for the moment Mr. Joly could not be disturbed, and the federal Ministry had

[1] It has been thought remarkable that Mr. Pope's Life of Sir John Macdonald has no reference whatever to the dismissal of Letellier.

neither constitutional nor popular warrant to justify the reversal of the judgment of a previous Parliament, and proceed to the forcible ejectment of the executive head of a self-governing province.

Mr. Laurier, speaking to Mousseau's motion, said that if the Conservative party in Quebec had not been defeated, Letellier's opponents would not be seeking vengeance at the hands of the House of Commons. The fact that the appeal to the Commons was necessary was the best evidence that the result of the Quebec elections was to uphold the action of the Lieutenant-Governor. It was now proposed to substitute the will of the Dominion for the will of the Province of Quebec. If the conduct of the Lieutenant-Governor had been extraordinary, that of the Administration which he had dismissed was still more extraordinary. It had systematically trampled down the royal prerogative, and had struggled to substitute government by an oligarchy for government by the people. This oligarchy was itself ruled by rings whose greedy appetite had to be fed from the public treasury, while the treasury had to be replenished by the people at the price of their civil liberty. He argued at length that while the act of the Lieutenant-Governor might have been unwise, it was within the scope of his functions, and was covered by ministerial responsibility. We had, he contended, a federal and not a legislative form of government, and to force upon Quebec the judgment of a federal Ministry would be an invasion

of the fundamental principle of Confederation.[1] But this reasoning availed nothing. It had been determined in advance that Letellier should be sacrificed, and Mousseau's motion was accordingly accepted by the Conservative majority in Parliament.[2]

Sir John Macdonald then recommended to Lord Lorne that Letellier should be removed from office. But the Governor-General did not give immediate effect to the mandate. It was announced that as he could find no precedents to guide him to a decision, and as the conclusion reached would settle for the future the relations between the federal and the provincial Governments so far as the office of Lieutenant-Governor was concerned, he deemed it expedient to ask instructions from the Imperial authorities. For a time it was thought that Lord Lorne had sought Imperial counsel in defiance of his Canadian advisers, and he was therefore violently attacked by the Conservative press and the Conservative politicians of Quebec. It transpired later that he had acted at the suggestion of the Canadian Government, and under all the circumstances was

[1] Hansard, March 12th, 1879.

[2] "Mr. Letellier's action was no doubt within the scope of his powers, but it was a most dangerous step. I was sorry he did not assign better reasons for it. The action of the electors saves him from popular condemnation, and having acted strictly within the scope of his powers, we could not recall him. I took the line in the House that we had no right to interfere with a Governor in the exercise of his constitutional functions by declaring his action to be either wise or unwise."—Letter from Mr. Mackenzie to a political friend, quoted in the Buckingham-Ross biography.

clearly entitled to more chivalrous treatment than he received from the Administration. Whether Sir John Macdonald desired Imperial sanction for Letellier's dismissal, or hoped by appeal to the Home Government to thwart the design of his supporters from Quebec, cannot be finally settled until his biographer in some later volume discloses the inner history of this important constitutional incident.

The judgment of the Home Government, as voiced by the Colonial Secretary, was that: "The Lieutenant-Governor of a province has an indisputable right to dismiss his Ministers if from any cause he feels it incumbent upon him to do so." It was, however, pointed out that in the exercise of this right, as of any other of his functions, he should maintain the impartiality between rival political parties, which was essential to the proper performance of the duties of his office, and that for any action he might take he was directly responsible to the Governor-General. These and similar powers were intended to be exerised by the Governor-General, "by and with the advice of his Ministers," and though the position of a Governor-General would entitle his views to peculiar weight, yet the Imperial Government did not find anything in the circumstances which would justify him in departing, in this instance, from the general rule, and declining to follow the decided and sustained opinion of his Ministers, who were responsible for the peace and

good government of the Dominion to the Parliament to which the cause assigned for the removal of a Lieutenant-Governor must be communicated.[1] This decision in both branches is probably sound; but it leaves no substantial constitutional power in the hands of the Governor-General, and gives no security to provincial Governors against the possible action of a hostile federal Ministry. If the ministry which Letellier dismissed had been restored to office at the ensuing elections, his resignation or removal from office would then have become necessary, and this fact was practically admitted by the Liberal leaders when the conduct of Letellier was under consideration. But since the Province of Quebec had failed to condemn his conduct, his dismissal by the federal Government was an arbitrary and revolutionary proceeding.

Twelve years later, Mr. Angers, who was Attorney-General in the Government which Letellier turned out of office, held the Lieutenant-Governorship of Quebec, and it became his privilege to dismiss the Mercier Government, and to call upon his old chief to form a new Administration. In this instance a Conservative Government held office at Ottawa, but the severity practised upon Mr. Letellier was not thought to be necessary in the case of Mr. Angers. The Governor was, of course, strongly attacked by the press and speakers of the

[1] See despatch of Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Liberal party, but when the people of Quebec voted confidence in the Ministers to whose hands he had transferred the administration of affairs, the Liberal leaders in the House of Commons bowed to the popular judgment.

British Columbia furnishes a second instance of the dismissal of a Lieutenant-Governor, but under what is generally regarded as strictly constitutional conditions. In 1899, Mr. McInnes dismissed his advisers, and called upon the Hon. Joseph Martin, who could not pretend to have the confidence of a majority of the Legislature, to form a Government. Mr. Martin succeeded in this task, but only with great difficulty, and when he appealed to the constituencies, was decisively beaten. Mr. McInnes was therefore removed from office, and it does not seem that any other course was possible under the circumstances.

The facts go to show that a Lieutenant-Governor may at least have great power for mischief. Acting in collusion with a sympathetic Administration at Ottawa, he may produce very unsatisfactory relations between a provincial Government and the federal authority. It is doubtful if in any of the cases under consideration the interference of the executive head can be fully justified, and it is quite certain that official autocracy is inimical to the satisfactory working of free institutions. It will, however, be admitted that a Lieutenant-Governor should not be dismissed for less adequate cause than

would involve the recall of a Governor-General. It will also be admitted that no Canadian Government would venture to treat the representative of the Crown in Canada, and no British Ministry would venture to treat the Sovereign, as Letellier was treated by the Debouchervillle Government. A great meeting was held at Quebec to protest against Letellier's dismissal, at which Mr. Laurier was one of the chief speakers; but with the mass of Conservatives partisan considerations obscured the constitutional issue, and neither this noteworthy demonstration nor the protests made at other points in the province, seriously affected public opinion. Letellier's death occurred shortly after his dismissal, hastened perhaps by the humiliation and degradation to which he had been subjected; and a bad precedent was written down irrevocably in the constitutional history of the country.

There was nothing timid or equivocal in the tariff measure brought down by Sir Leonard Tilley as a result of the Conservative party's electoral victory in 1878. It was not a readjustment of the old tariff. It was distinct and unmitigated protection. The declared objects of its authors were to establish and maintain native industries, and to preserve the home market for Canadian manufacturers and producers. In order to accomplish these objects the duties on imports were materially increased, specific duties were substituted for *ad valorem* charges, and more stringent regulations to prevent

undervaluation of goods coming in from other countries were adopted. The new tariff necessarily bore heavily on many lines of British imports, but this was incidental rather than deliberate. The chief design was to limit the importation of American products and American manufactures, and to encourage by high duties the growth or manufacture of such products in Canada. The tariff, however, contained a provision for limited reciprocity with the United States, under which the Canadian Government was empowered to admit animals and all natural products free of duty, when the authorities at Washington should consent to give free admission of similar Canadian products to the American markets.[1]

The Liberal leaders in Parliament met the tariff with the arguments they had unsuccessfully employed to persuade the people to reject the

[1] Any or all of the following articles, that is to say, animals of all kinds, green fruit, hay, straw, bran, seeds of all kinds, vegetables (including potatoes and other roots), plants, trees, and shrubs, coal and coke, salt, hops, wheat, peas and beans, barley, rye, oats, Indian corn, buckwheat and all other grain, flour of wheat and flour of rye, Indian meal and oatmeal, and flour or meal of any other grain, butter, cheese, fish (salted or smoked), lard, tallow, meats (fresh, salted, or smoked), and lumber, may be imported into Canada free of duty, or at a less rate of duty than is provided by this Act upon proclamation of the Governor-in-Council, which may be issued whenever it appears to his satisfaction, that similar articles from Canada may be imported into the United States free of duty, or at a rate of duty not exceeding that payable on the same under such proclamation when imported into Canada.—Statutory offer of reciprocity in natural products in the Customs Act of 1879.

protectionist policy of the Conservative party. They contended that protection was a departure from the economic policy of Great Britain, and was calculated to estrange Canada from the mother country. They laboured to show that protection was necessarily partial in its benefits, and must enrich a favoured class at the expense of the mass of the community. It was insisted that the farmers could not be protected, and that they must continue to sell their products in the world's markets, and pay increased prices to a league of home manufacturers protected against outside competition. Mr. Mackenzie said the effect of the protection introduced would be to degrade the working classes, build up the fortunes of a few manufacturers, and in a short time ruin even those manufacturers after they had accomplished the ruin of the working people. It was contended that the adoption of protection would create a business partnership between the Government and the protected interests, and so tend to corruption in elections, and to the dependence of the manufacturing classes upon the favour of Ministers.[1] Many Liberals doubted the wisdom of special tariff legislation against the United States, and were convinced that the cause

[1] "I have called a meeting of the leading supporters of the National Policy at the Queen's Hotel, Toronto, on June 6th, at 1.30 p.m. I particularly desire your presence at the meeting, as matters of great moment will be dealt with. Bring with you such friends of the N.P. as you may think it is desirable should be present."—Circular letter of Sir John Macdonald to the manufacturers, June 1st, 1882.

of reciprocity would be seriously retarded by the new fiscal policy of the Canadian Government. These and many other arguments, with which all Canadians are perhaps even wearily familiar, were ably and persistently advanced by the Liberal Opposition against the Tilley tariff, and for many years thereafter were the warp and woof of our political literature. It is not impossible that the tariff issue was invested with exaggerated importance, and that other questions of equal concern to the people and less inimical to the stability of business conditions were overlooked, during the long enduring quarrel over the moral aspects and the national results of the policy of protection.

Mr. Laurier's speech in Committee of Ways and Means on the Tilley tariff was concerned mainly with the defence of the Liberals of Quebec against the many imputations of inconsistency and disloyalty alleged against them by Conservative speakers during the progress of the controversy. It is hard for a party, and particularly for a party in opposition, to maintain a moderate attitude. The Mackenzie Administration had taken definite ground against increase of customs taxation; the electoral contest of 1878 had turned upon that issue; and it was natural that the controversy should drift towards a direct conflict between the principles of free trade and the principles of protection. Mr. Laurier had never thought that absolute free trade was of possible application under the conditions

which prevailed in Canada, and it was inevitable that many arguments advanced by his associates should go beyond the ground which he had always taken in the discussion of fiscal questions. He was bound to be confronted with the protectionist and separatist policy of Papineau, and his own declarations in favour of a moderate measure of protection for Canadian industries in the earlier stages of their development. But when he was charged with abandoning the policy of Papineau, he told his opponents that that policy was designed to sever the alliance between Canada and Great Britain, and was adopted during the struggle of the French Liberals to secure responsible government and constitutional liberty. When these concessions were granted, that policy was abandoned and ceased to have advocates in Canada until it was restored by the leader of the Conservative party. Papineau had never told the people that they would derive economic benefits from his policy, but rather that it involved sacrifice in order that liberty might be obtained. He reminded his opponents that Cartier was a rebel with a price set upon his head, but that when responsible government was secured, he became a loyal subject and the leader of the Conservative party. He quoted from a speech made by Cartier in 1871, in which he said: "Manufacturers often ask for protective duties. This is absurd; the same may be said of extreme free trade notions. If you do not pay duties to the Government upon manufactured goods, you

must have recourse to direct taxation to make up for the loss out of the abolition of duties. With exaggerated protection you kill your foreign trade, as the Americans have done, and you must have recourse to direct taxation. We shall not commit such a folly. We have adopted the policy of a revenue tariff and not a protective tariff."

Mr. Laurier showed how the Conservative party had been driven by the manufacturers into the acceptance of protection, and denied that since 1841 the Liberal party had stood for a protectionist policy. It was not true that when the Liberal party of Quebec was reorganized in 1872 it had made protection one of the planks of its platform. There was in that platform no reference to a commercial programme except the demand for the right to regulate commercial relations with foreign countries so as to ensure the establishment of manufactures in Canada. He pointed out that there was a provision in the Tilley tariff for a measure of free trade with the Americans, but that this benefit was denied to England, and he declared that "this policy was injurious, and not only injurious in itself, but unworthy of the Canadian people towards the English people." He opposed the tariff also because it was a universal increase of taxation, disguised under the name of protection. While there would be an increase of taxation all round, there could not be an increase of labour all round. Either the tariff would or would not decrease importations.

If it did not decrease importations, everything would be made dearer to the consumers, and there might not be a day's more labour in the country. If, on the other hand, importations were decreased, he admitted that while articles would be made dearer to the consumers, there would be more labour in the country. In some cases, however, labour would be destroyed, and particularly in connection with the shipping industry. Finally, he opposed the tariff because it introduced the abominable system of taxing all the necessaries of the poor. Tea, sugar, bread, and clothing would be put under tribute; flour and coal were subjected to imposts, and he predicted that the mothers in Quebec cottages would curse the day that this tariff was introduced.[1]

It is quite likely that we exaggerate the industrial effects of economic policies, and it is quite certain that we exaggerate the responsibility of governments for commercial conditions. It is vain to expect any general agreement as to the results of the operation of protection in Canada. But the fact stands that under the protectionist system our ratio of progress was the most unsatisfactory in all our history, and that the sounding prophecies of industrial prosperity and national growth which filled the mouths of the politicians by whom the system was imposed upon the country, had imperfect and inadequate realization, It is, however, fair to remember that during this period the West was

[1] Hansard, April 9th, 1879.

passing through the initial stages of development. The ingoing settlers had to learn the nature of its soil, and the moods of its climate, and to determine the best processes of agriculture over an enormous area of new territory. During the same period, farming in the older provinces was passing through the long agony of low prices, facing still more hostile American tariffs, meeting the increasing competition of Argentina and Russia, and adapting itself with loss and pain and travail to the demands of the British market. These conditions Canada would have had to face in any event; and thus it is quite possible to exaggerate the evil effects of protection, even while it is recognized that it failed, and failed decisively, to meet the anticipations of its advocates, and burdened rather than benefited the great staple industries of the country.

CHAPTER XIV

THE PACIFIC RAILWAY

IN 1871 British Columbia was admitted into the Confederation. The chief feature of the contract was that which stipulated for the commencement within two, and the completion within ten years from the date of union, of a railway connecting the Pacific Ocean, through British territory, with the railway systems of Ontario and Quebec. The leaders of the Liberal party, while favourable to the admission of British Columbia, and by no means hostile to the construction of a transcontinental road across British territory, thought that to build the railway within the time specified would press too heavily upon the resources of the Dominion; and argued that it was enough to proceed with the surveys in the meantime, and subsequently with the work of construction, as the state of the finances would justify. These views, however, were rejected by Parliament, and the country was committed to the more heroic policy of the Conservative leaders.

Towards the close of the session of 1871, on the motion of Sir George Cartier, a resolution was adopted to give effect to the ministerial policy. This provided that the road should be built and

operated by private enterprise, and not by the Government, and that such aid should be granted in lands and money as would not unduly press on the resources of the country, and as Parliament should thereafter determine. During the session of 1872 the Canadian Pacific Company, with Sir Hugh Allan at its head, and the Inter-Oceanic Company, organized by Sir David Macpherson, each proposing to undertake the construction of the railway, were granted charters by Parliament; and at the same time the Government took authority to negotiate for the amalgamation of the two companies, or to issue a royal charter to a new company. It was found impossible to effect an amalgamation, and the Government, therefore, formed under royal charter a company for the construction of the road, of which Sir Hugh Allan was president, and in which the several provinces of the Dominion were represented. The railway was a dominant issue in the general election of 1872. For the time the Government was sustained, but the discovery of Sir Hugh Allan's very heavy contributions to the Conservative campaign fund led to its early downfall. It was stated, however, in the Speech from the Throne, at the opening of the session during which the defeat of the Ministry was accomplished, that "The Canadian Pacific Railway Company, to whom a royal charter was granted, have been unable to make the financial arrangements necessary for the construction of that undertaking,

and have therefore executed a surrender of their charter which has been accepted."

Mr. Mackenzie, who succeeded to the office of Premier on the resignation of Sir John Macdonald, in his address to the electors of Lambton, outlined the railway policy of his Government. He intimated that he would seek such a modification of the terms made with British Columbia as would "give time for the completion of the surveys, the acquisition of the information necessary to an intelligent apprehension of the work, and its prosecution with such speed and under such arrangements as the resources of the country will permit, without too largely increasing the burden of taxation on the people." In the meantime he would "utilize the enormous stretches of water communication which lie between a point not far from the Rocky Mountains and Fort Garry, and between Lake Superior and French River on the Georgian Bay, thus avoiding for the present the construction of about 1,300 miles of railway, estimated to cost from sixty to eighty millions of dollars, and rendering the resources of the country available for the prosecution of those links of the Pacific Railway which are necessary in order to form a complete line of rail and water communication from East to West." This, he pointed out,[1] would involve the construction of a short line of railway from the

[1] See Mr. Mackenzie's "Address to the Electors of Lambton," January, 1874.

mouth of the French River on Georgian Bay to the south-east shore of Lake Nipissing, and a grant in aid of extension to that point of the existing and projected lines in Quebec and Ontario. He also pledged his Administration to the early construction of a branch line of railway from Fort Garry to Pembina.[1]

In 1874 the Government obtained authority from Parliament to construct the railway as a public work, if it should so decide, and to divide the road into four sections, the first from Lake Nipissing to the west end of Lake Superior, the second from Lake Superior to Red River, the third from Red River to the foot of the Rocky Mountains, and the fourth from the foot of the Rockies to the Pacific coast; or to arrange with contractors for the construction of the work on the basis of a subsidy per mile of $10,000 in money and 20,000 acres of land, with four per cent. interest for twenty-five years on a sum to be stated in the contract. It was provided that the land should be of fair average quality, and in alternate sections, and the Government reserved the right to sell two-thirds of the

[1] "No Government that could be formed will carry on the work of construction more efficiently and speedily than will that of Mr. Mackenzie. It was the Reform party that first advocated the annexation of the North-West Territory, including British Columbia. It is among Reformers that are found the most enthusiastic supporters of the Pacific Railway. And it is by a Reform Government that the work must be carried to final completion. It is not the people of British Columbia, therefore, that have cause to regret the advent of Reformers to power." —Toronto *Globe*, February 13th, 1874.

land grant at prices to be arranged with the contractors, to whom the proceeds of sales should be paid half-yearly. It was also provided, in case this plan of construction were adopted, that the contractors should own and operate the road, under regulations in respect of freight and passenger charges and the frequency of service; but that the Government should have the power to buy out the whole or any part of the road at a sum not exceeding ten per cent. above the actual cost, and subject to a deduction equal to the value of the land and money subsidies. It was, however, found impossible to induce capitalists to undertake the construction of the road on the terms proposed; and Mr. Mackenzie, under that clause of the Act which empowered the Government to construct the railway as a public work, placed under contract 114 miles from Selkirk eastward to Rat Portage, and 113 miles from Fort William westward to English River. The construction of the Pembina branch, from the international boundary to St. Boniface, was completed in the autumn of 1878, and railway communication with Winnipeg thus established. A telegraph line from Red River to Edmonton, covering 807 miles of country, was also erected during 1874 and 1875; and early in 1875 a contract was entered into for the erection of a telegraph line from Red River to the Lake Superior terminus of the projected railway.

In British Columbia progress with the great

enterprise was less satisfactory. Unsuccessful attempts were made to negotiate with the provincial Government for an extension of the time for the construction of the transcontinental road "beyond that provided in the terms of union." Mr. J. D. Edgar visited the province as commissioner from the Dominion Government, and undertook to guarantee continuous construction and the expenditure on the road within the boundaries of the province of one million dollars annually until it was completed. The provincial Premier, however, refused to negotiate with Mr. Edgar until officially informed that he was specially accredited as the agent of the general Government. This was a purely factious objection, and indicated a spirit inimical to satisfactory negotiation. Finally, the provincial authorities appealed to the Imperial Government against the breach of the terms of union by Canada, and Lord Carnarvon offered to act as intermediary between the provincial and federal Governments. The offer was accepted, both by the province and by the Dominion, and the "Carnarvon terms" resulted.

These provided for the immediate construction of a line of railway from Nanaimo to Esquimault on Vancouver Island; the expenditure of a definite minimum amount on surveys on the mainland; the abandonment of the proposed wagon road across the Rocky Mountains; the postponement of the building of the telegraph line from the mountains

to the Pacific until the route of the railway should be settled; compensation to the province for the delay, provided the surveys were not completed and construction commenced within the time to be agreed upon; the expenditure of at least two million dollars annually on construction until the road was finished; and the final completion of the work in the year 1890. A bill to give effect to this compromise was passed by the Commons during the session of 1875, but was thrown out by the Senate, acting under the influence of paltry partisan considerations, and thus a thoroughly satisfactory and statesmanlike settlement of the whole question was prevented. The Hon. Edward Blake must share with the Senate the responsibility for the rejection of the Carnarvon compromise. He voted against the bill to provide for the construction of the Nanaimo and Esquimault railway, gravely increased the disaffection among Liberals over the very onerous terms of the bargain with British Columbia, and developed by his attitude a temper in the House of Commons in face of which Mr. Mackenzie had practically no alternative but to abandon the Carnarvon settlement.

Mr. Blake, in fact, maintained an attitude of consistent and inflexible opposition to the fulfillment of the terms of union with British Columbia. In his speech at Aurora in 1874, in which occurs the reference to the Pacific province as a "sea of mountains," he said: "Speaking conjecturally, I am

of the opinion that the British Columbia section of the railway, even if it turns out to be practicable as an engineering work, will involve an enormous expenditure, approximating to $36,000,000, and after its completion will involve an enormous annual charge on the revenues of the country for its running expenses; and I doubt much if that section can be kept open after it is built. I think the chief advantage the British Columbians will derive from the enterprise will consist in the circulation of money and the profits of mercantile operations attendant on the construction, and that Canada will be a frightful loser by the affair." He declared that under all the circumstances, if British Columbia were to demand the construction of the road according to the terms, or claim the alternative of release from the Confederation, he would take the alternative. "If," he said, "these two thousand men understand that the people of Canada are prepared, in preference to the compliance with their ruinous demands, to let them go, and to leave them to build the Columbia section with their ten thousand people, their tone will be more moderate, and we shall hear no talk about secession. The principal person who has spoken of it hitherto is Sir John Macdonald, who almost invited it in his election speech during the late contest. They won't secede; they know better. Should they leave the Confederation, the Confederation would survive, and they would lose their money."

In the Senate in 1876, Mr. Carrall, one of the delegates from British Columbia who arranged the terms of union with the federal Government, declared that among the strongest reasons which prompted other loyal Canadians, as well as himself, was that emissaries from the United States had come amongst them, and were pressing them to join the Republic. It had been said at Victoria by one of these agents that the policy of the United States in purchasing Alaska was to consummate the absorption of British Columbia. A delegation therefore visited Ottawa, and the conditions upon which British Columbia would become a part of the Dominion were arranged. He said that at that time Sir John Macdonald was at the point of death, and was not responsible personally for the terms of the contract into which his Cabinet entered. He reminded the Senate that he had stated on a previous occasion in the Chamber, and desired to repeat it now, and would appeal to the reporter to take down his words correctly, that ten years was not put into the terms of union as an absolute limit for the construction of the railway, but simply as a *bona fides* that the Government would commence the road and carry it on to completion as quickly as could be, without injury to the interests of the country.[1]

Sir David Macpherson, in the same debate, said: "I believe the people of this Dominion from one

[1] Senate Debates, 1876, page 153.

end to the other desire the construction of our great national railway, not in an extravagant manner; not before the means of the country would permit of its being constructed without inconvenience to the exchequer; not faster than the settlement of the country required; but as fast as the interests of the Dominion demanded."[1] On March 31st, 1876, the Senate by 34 to 24, on motion of Mr. Dickey, affirmed that, "This House fully recognizes the obligation to secure the construction of the Canada Pacific Railway, with the utmost speed compatible with a due regard to the other financial requirements of the Dominion, and without unduly increasing the rate of taxation, and regrets that the course adopted by the Government in connection with this matter has not met the expectations of the people of British Columbia, nor has it been such as to facilitate the development of the North-West."[2] On April 7th, 1876, the House of Commons declared that the arrangements for the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway should be such as the resources of the country would permit without increasing the existing rates of taxation. For this proposition 149 votes were cast, as against only 10 in the negative. Among those voting for the proposition were Baby, Costigan, Desjardins, Kirkpatrick, Langevin, Masson, Mousseau, Ouimet, Plumb, and Robitaille—all men of

[1] Senate Debates, 1876, page 163.

[2] Senate Debates, 1876, pages 236 and 280.

conspicuous position and exceptional influence in the Conservative party.[1]

Mr. Blake's attitude on the Carnarvon compromise and the original compact with British Columbia, is clearly stated in a speech delivered in Parliament in 1880. He said: "During the session of 1875, when the Carnarvon correspondence was brought down, I did ask the leader of the then Government whether he proposed to invite the sanction of Parliament to the arrangement. He replied that he did not propose to invite the action of Parliament directly, but that he would rely on Parliament to enable him to carry it out. Well, that answer of itself indicated that the assent of Parliament was essential. Will anyone seriously contend that the executive Government of this country could, not merely without the authority of Parliament, but in spite of the anti-taxation resolution, make an agreement which would of itself bind the country to build the Island Railway, to expend not less than $2,000,000 a year on construction in the mainland, and to finish the road by 1890? It was, however, soon made apparent that the action of Parliament was necessary in order to carry out the Carnarvon terms. A bill was of necessity brought in to authorize the construction of the Island Railway—one of the most important parts of those terms. I opposed that bill because I believed that the Island Railway was not a

[1] Hansard, 1876, pages 1,126-1,130.

judicious undertaking, and also, and chiefly, because it was part of the Carnarvon terms, which I did not believe were such as could be fully carried out consistently with the taxation resolution, to which I for one was determined to adhere. . . . Shortly after the close of the session, I entered the Administration upon a distinct understanding in reference to the Pacific Railway. That understanding was that, the Carnarvon terms having failed by reason of the action of Parliament, a moderate money compensation should be offered to the province for past and future delays in the construction of the Pacific Railway; that it was always the understanding of the Government, and that it should be distinctly stated, that any pledge for fixed expenditure or for a time limit was subject to the taxation resolution, in such sort that the work should not be necessarily proceeded with in case it would involve an increase in taxation; and that any arrangement made with the province should be expressly, as it must in fact be, subject to the sanction of this Parliament."[1]

In the summer of 1876, Lord Dufferin visited British Columbia on a mission of conciliation. He was eager to be clothed with ministerial authority, and sought to wrest from his advisers a right of independent initiative in the adjustment of relations between the province and the Dominion. This demand Mr. Mackenzie strenuously and successfully

[1] Hansard, April 15th, 1880.

resisted. There were, however, heated and angry interviews between the Governor and the Prime Minister, and for some time thereafter the personal relations between the two men were not quite satisfactory. But this, like other serious disagreements between Lord Dufferin and his Canadian advisers, was finally adjusted, and peace and mutual confidence restored. There is no doubt that this acute, able, and resourceful diplomat found it hard to accommodate himself to the limitations which surround the office of Governor of a self-governing commonwealth, and that he liberally interpreted and freely exercised all the authority which was covered by his commission from the Home Government. It is fair to add that, during the later years of his stay in Canada, he was on exceedingly cordial and intimate terms with Mr. Mackenzie; and when the Liberal Government met defeat, no one bore more generous testimony to the patriotism, integrity, and high-mindedness of its vanquished leader.

Only good resulted from Lord Dufferin's visit to British Columbia. His judicious presentation of the attitude of the Government and of older Canada, coupled with Mr. Mackenzie's energetic prosecution of the surveys, definite adoption of the Burrard Inlet route for the British Columbia section, and active construction of vital links of the railway, bred a more moderate temper in the Pacific province, and largely reconciled public opinion to the policy of the national Administration. This was the position

of the great project when the Mackenzie Government was defeated and the Conservative party restored to office.

On May 10th, 1879, Sir Charles Tupper announced the railway policy of the new Government. It was set forth in the resolutions which he laid before Parliament that in view of the importance of keeping good faith with British Columbia and completing the consolidation of the Confederation of the provinces in British North America, and in consideration of the national character of the undertaking, the Government should seek the co-operation of the Imperial authorities by guarantee or otherwise.[1] It was proposed that 100,000,000 acres of land and such minerals as they contained should be appropriated for the purposes of construction. This land was to be vested in commissioners, and the Imperial Government was to be represented on the Commission. All the ungranted Dominion lands within twenty miles of the line of the road were to be set apart as a railway reserve, and the Commission was to be authorized to sell from time to time any portions thereof at the rate of not less than $2 an acre, and was directed to invest the proceeds in Canadian Government securities, to be held exclusively for the purpose of meeting the cost of

[1] Reporting on a Pacific Railway Bill to the Canadian Legislature in 1851, the Railway Committee said: "Your Committee indulge a hope that the Imperial Government will be led to entertain the subject as one of national importance, and to combine with it a general and well organized system of colonization."

construction. It was further declared that as it was desirable to combine the promotion of colonization with railway extension, the Government should be authorized to enter into a contract for the construction of a part of the road from the Red River westerly, running to the south of Lake Manitoba, with a branch to Winnipeg, and to expend $1,000,000 on the work without submitting the contracts to Parliament. It was also held to be expedient before commencing the work of building in British Columbia, to make further explorations in order to guarantee the construction of the road through the largest extent of fertile territory. The selection of the Burrard Inlet terminus was condemned as premature; but in order to keep good faith with British Columbia, it was provided that so soon as further necessary explorations were made and the route determined, the Government should place 125 miles under contract in British Columbia without the further sanction of Parliament. These resolutions reversed the policy of Mackenzie in some essential features, and in concurrence were met with amendments affirming the general position of his Government on the various branches of the question, and declaring once again that the construction of the railway should not involve material increase in the rate of taxation.[1]

[1] In a speech in the House of Commons, on March 18th, 1902, Sir Richard Cartwright said that the policy of Mr. Mackenzie had three

But Parliament had not even yet evolved the proposition under which the Canadian Pacific Railway project was at length to be carried to success. Sir John Macdonald, Sir Charles Tupper, and Sir Leonard Tilley proceeded to England, but failed to secure direct Imperial aid or any Imperial guarantee of less direct support for the enterprise. This necessitated material modifications of the policy of 1879; and during the session of 1880, Sir Charles Tupper introduced resolutions providing that the 100,000,000 acres of land proposed to be vested in commissioners, and held at $2 an acre, should be selected and reserved by order of the Governor-in-Council as railway lands, sold at prices to be fixed from time to time by the Governor-in-Council, but never at

grand features—he intended, in the first place, to reserve the land for settlers, to sell it to settlers only at low rates, and to give money only to promote the building of colonization railways; he intended, in the second place, to construct a number of short line colonization railways, radiating from Winnipeg; and he intended in the third place, to use all the power of the Government to keep the people together and form a solid state in and about the present Province of Manitoba, from whhic afterwards, as a base, railways might radiate on every side. Sir Richard said that he had since discussed this policy with men of great ability and experience in the North-West Territories, and of all political persuasions, and they had agreed that it was one of the greatest misfortunes that had ever befallen the North-West that it was not carried out. He argued that if this policy had been adopted, in all probability we should have had 500,000 families, or 2,000,000 of people settled in Manitoba, Alberta, Assiniboia, and Saskatchewan, and a volume of trade not far from $1,000,000,000. Canada, if Mr. Mackenzie had remained in power to carry out the policy he had devised for the development of the North-West, would have been something like one thousand million dollars richer, and the people would have numbered 2,000,000 more than they did.

less than $1 an acre, and the proceeds devoted exclusively to the construction of the railway. In moving this resolution, Sir Charles Tupper entered into an elaborate examination of the plans of the Government, the position of the project, and the probable expenditure necessary to carry it to completion. He explained that 127 miles of road had been put under contract in British Columbia, as also the first one hundred miles west of Winnipeg. The cost of construction up to December 31st, 1879, was $14,000,000, and he estimated that the whole road could be built for $84,000,000, and that in view of the estimated sales of lands the work could be carried through without increasing the burdens of the people. He argued that both of the political parties were fully pledged to the construction of the railway, and claimed that while the Conservative Government in 1871 had only pledged itself to build the road in ten years, provided it did not cause an increase in taxation, the Liberal Government had gone even further, and had pledged the country by the Carnarvon terms to complete the road by 1890, and to spend $2,000,000 a year in British Columbia, without regard to whether or not the burden of taxation was increased.

The amended policy was adopted by Parliament, and work proceeded under the plan of Government construction. There is no doubt that the policy of public construction was adopted by the Mackenzie Government with some hesitation, and not

without fear as to the final results; and that if satisfactory terms could have been arranged, Mr. Mackenzie would have preferred construction by private capitalists. The original decision of the Conservative Government was also for private as against public construction. The Liberals, however, were forced to reverse this policy; and in his speech of 1880, Sir Charles Tupper declared that he too had undergone a change of opinion, and could now heartily accept the policy of construction by the Government. When the proposal was first made by the Liberal Administration in 1874, he had considered that the responsibility was too great; but now he thought popular feeling was so strongly in favour of settling the North-West, and the certainty of the large immigration and consequent sales of land was so great that he did not feel that there was any danger in proceeding with the work.[1] This seems to have been the view of Sir John Macdonald, at least at the inception of the undertaking. The Baroness Macdonald, in a contribution to an English periodical in 1897, intimated that the Conservative leader much preferred Government construction, and reluctantly surrendered to the prejudices of his colleagues in favour of construction by a private company.[2]

[1] Hansard, April 15th, 1880.

[2] "During Sir John's absence in Washington, the Government had pledged itself to build the road through the agency of an incorporated company supplemented by Government aid. I think Sir John regretted

Mr. Alexander, on March 21st, 1876, submitted a resolution to the Senate affirming that the policy of building and operating railways as public works of the Dominion instead of aiding private chartered companies with bonuses of land and money, was fraught with disastrous consequences to the welfare of Canada, and must inevitably subject the public treasury to large annual advances to make good deficiencies in the amounts required to maintain such railways in working order, and thereby tend seriously to impair the public credit.[1] Mr. Miller, speaking to the motion, declared he was not prepared to say that in a new country like Canada, occasions did not arise when it was the imperative duty of the Government to construct and own important public works such as railways.[2] Sir David Macpherson also said that he would not be one to commit the House to the view that the country should not construct railways as public works. He believed, indeed, that it was the only way in which a great portion of the Pacific Railway could be constructed. Government operation he regarded as much more objectionable.[3]

this and would fain have had the railway constructed as a Government work; but his boldness was not to be communicated, and those in charge of the ship in his absence had judged the concession best, so as not to endanger the union with British Columbia."—Baroness Macdonald, in the *Pall Mall Magazine* for October, 1897.

[1] Senate Debates, 1876, page 170.

[2] Senate Debates, 1876, page 173.

[3] Senate Debates, 1876, page 175.

In 1873 Senator Macpherson had advocated construction by the Public Works' Department, or by a Board of Commissioners.

But the policy which Mr. Mackenzie adopted through stress of circumstances, and which his Conservative successors strove to continue, was abandoned in 1881 for the original plan of construction and operation by a private company. Many causes contributed to this decision. The difficulties of building through a comparatively unknown and wholly unsettled country were enormous. The cost of many sections of the work could not be satisfactorily determined. Both Governments were assailed with charges of fraud in the letting and management of contracts. The ultimate cost under public construction threatened to exceed all estimates. The failure to effect a partnership with Great Britain for the building of the road and the settlement of the West voided the chief expectation upon which the Conservative Ministers depended to continue Mackenzie's policy. Under all the circumstances, therefore, it was resolved to reverse the policy and renew the attempt to interest private capitalists in the undertaking.[1] In June, 1881, the

[1] "Our deliverance from Government contracts and their pestilent influence is almost as great a cause for rejoicing as our deliverance from the mad undertaking itself. We may say so without casting an aspersion on any particular Government. No Government, however honest, can control the powers of mischief which are called into activity by contracting on a large scale. The army and navy contracts in England, at the time of the war with France, were sources of jobbing and corruption as prolific as the contracts of the same description in

country received the first intimation that the plan of public construction was to be abandoned. In a speech at Bath, Sir John Macdonald announced that private capitalists were then at Ottawa negotiating for the building of the railway. A few weeks later the Prime Minister, Sir Charles Tupper, and the Hon. J. H. Pope, in pursuance of these negotiations, sailed for England; and in September it was announced that a contract, subject to the ratification of Parliament, had been made with capitalists of London, Paris, and America, for the construction and maintenance of the railway. Thus the policy of public construction was finally abandoned, and thus was made the gravest national mistake in all our history.

The contract with the syndicate, of which Mr. George Stephen, Mr. Duncan J. McIntyre, and Mr. R. B. Angus were the original Canadian directors,

the United States, or railway contracts here. Look at Mr. Sandford Fleming's letter declining the Chief Engineership of the Intercolonial. He says he would have to investigate unsettled claims amounting to several millions. What an opening for corruption is here! When the scene of operations is distant, and not under the eye of the Government, the danger cannot fail to be increased. The very names of some of the men who are active in connection with the North-West are enough to prove that corruption is abroad. There must be a carcass, and a pretty putrid one, where such birds are gathered together. Even to us materials for creating a sensation on the subject of contracts have come; but there is no use in creating a sensation; what we want is to see the source of the evil extinguished. Of the dangers which threaten free institutions on this continent there is hardly one greater than the corruption which waits on public works."—*The Bystander*, August, 1880.

provided that they should receive $25,000,000 in cash, and 25,000,000 acres of land. The grant of land was to be made in alternate sections of 640 acres each, extending back twenty-four miles deep on each side of the railway. In case any such sections were found unfit for settlement, the company was to be empowered to make other selections in the fertile belt necessary to complete the 25,000,000 acres. The Government was to grant to the company lands required for road-bed, station-grounds, work-shops, dock-ground, and water frontage at the termini on navigable waters, and all materials of construction were to be admitted free of duty. The company were to have the right to construct branch roads from any point on the main line of railway on filing a map and plan of such branch in the Department of Railways. For twenty years from the date of the contract no competing road south of the main line of the railway was to be authorized by Parliament, and in the establishment of new provinces provision was to be made for continuing this prohibition until the expiration of the twenty-year period. All station-grounds, work-shops, buildings, yards and other property, and all rolling stock and appurtenances required for the construction and operation of the railroad, and the capital stock of the company, were to be free forever from taxation by the Dominion or by any province thereafter to be established, or by any municipal corporation therein; and the lands of the company

in the Territories, until either sold or occupied, should also be free of such taxation for twenty years after the grant from the Crown. The tolls of the railway were not to be reduced until the net profits exceeded 10 per cent. on the capital actually expended in its construction. The company were to pay the cost of building the portion of railway running 100 miles from Winnipeg westward; while the portion of the western section under contract from Kamloops to Yale was to be completed by June 30th, 1885, and the remaining portion of the western section between Yale and Port Moody by May 1st, 1891. These, with the Lake Superior section, on completion were to become the absolute property of the company.

According to the estimate of Sir Charles Tupper, the subventions granted to the company equalled at least $78,000,000. This estimate covered 25,000,000 acres of land at $1 an acre, $25,000,000 in cash, and $28,000,000 worth of completed railway. If we calculate original cost, interest, and cost of surveys, the portions of the road constructed by Government should be placed at $30,000,000 or $35,000,000, rather than at the figure quoted by Sir Charles Tupper. There were, besides, the huge exemptions, the monopoly provisions, and the absolute control of an empire of the best lands of the West. The bargain was fiercely attacked by the Liberal press and the Liberal politicians, and as energetically defended by the Government. The strenuous and masterful

defence of the contract by Sir Charles Tupper was a noteworthy feature of the controversy, and divided public attention with the Hon. Edward Blake's magnificent attack on the agreement. Mr. Blake held that according to Sir Charles Tupper's estimate of the total cost of the enterprise, the company would have to provide only $21,000,000, and for this they would receive 25,000,000 acres of land. He objected to the exemption of the lands from taxation for twenty years, as calculated to retard settlement. He argued that the company would hold the lands until their value had been enhanced by actual settlers, who would have to bear an inordinate share of taxation in consequence of the non-settlement of the exempted sections. He opposed the monopoly clauses, and the practical prohibition of public control over freight charges; and very ably advocated the Sault Ste. Marie route as affording the best and cheapest and most direct all-rail connection with Western Canada.

The Liberal leader, for such Mr. Blake had now become, was loyally and powerfully supported by Mr. Laurier. In his first speech in the House of Commons Mr. Laurier had said that the leaders of the Liberal party were as anxious as their opponents to have a railway constructed between older Canada and the Pacific, but that commercial, rather than political reasons, should determine the route, the amount of expenditure, and the method of construction. He said now that they should build

the road as the resources of the country would permit. But as the Government had determined to proceed with immediate construction, there was much to commend the idea of construction by a company rather than by the Government, and particularly owing to the great uncertainty, not merely as to the cost of building, but also as to the cost of future operation. He objected, however, to the partnership between the syndicate and the Administration. The country expected that by this contract the Government would be relieved from the work of construction. Instead, the company would build two sections of the road, and the Government two sections, and these the most difficult; and on completion the whole would belong to the company. The company could likewise import as freely as the Government, and like the Government were exempt from taxation. The Government would do the work of the company, and the company would have all the privileges of the Government. He condemned the provision against reduction of rates until the company's earnings reached 10 per cent. on the amount invested in construction, and the exemptions from taxation and other privileges which would give the company an almost absolute monopoly over the western country. They would be the landlords of the North-West, and could hold their lands out of use, fix their own tolls, and obtain extortionate profits out of the settlers. It was a question if the road had been gradually constructed, as the

necessities of the country required, if the Government of Canada would not have done well to proclaim that the needy and poor of all the world could find free land throughout the whole of the North-West, and under these favourable circumstances obtain the best market prices for their products. We should then have had, perhaps, fewer millionaires, but vastly more happy and contented homes.

Bye and bye, Mr. Laurier pointed out, municipal government would be organized in the West, roads opened, and other facilities of civilization provided. The company, however, could not be taxed for these necessities, while their exemptions and privileges must be a constant source of litigation and bitterness in the country. It was the universal experience that where men were not checked by positive laws and regulations, they would abuse their position to the detriment of their fellows. Every province of the Dominion had had its land company. There had been one in Ontario, one in New Brunswick, one in Quebec, and one in Prince Edward Island; and everywhere they had been a curse and a bane. Everywhere they had blocked settlement and pressed heavily upon the energies of the people. He found fault also with the condition in the contract which necessitated immediate construction of the road along the north shore of Lake Superior, while he agreed that the road should be built on Canadian soil. If, however, in the mean-

time the road to Sault Ste. Marie were constructed, we should have in two or three years at the utmost the benefit of the trade of North-Western Canada and of the north-western States of the Union. Finally, he declared that the contract with the syndicate was a public danger, inasmuch as it threatened to create upon the free soil of Canada a monopoly which might yet become a cause of trouble to the peace and harmony of the country; while if it was to be judged in the light of modern British ideas and principles, it carried its death warrant, and the duty of Parliament was to reject it on the first opportunity.[1]

The debate in Parliament was prolonged, and formidable protests were organized by the Liberals in various constituencies. Petitions signed by thirty thousand persons were presented against the ratification of the contract. A rival syndicate was formed, headed by Sir William Howland, which offered to accept twenty-two millions of money and twenty-two million acres of land; to forego exemptions from Dominion and local taxation on lands, and from duties on materials imported for use in construction; to build the Sault line for a bonus of $12,000 a mile; to allow the Government to postpone construction of the eastern section, of the western section from Kamloops to Port Moody, and of the mountain division of the central section; and to permit the country to assume possession of

[1] Hansard, December 21st, 1880.

the road, and of all the property and assets of the company, at a price to be fixed by arbitration. This offer was submitted to Parliament by Mr. Blake as an amendment to the original contract, but of course was rejected by the solid vote of the ministerial party, as were many other amendments and propositions offered by Liberal members during the session. At length the contract was ratified without any substantial alteration in the original provisions, and the company proceeded with extraordinary energy to the accomplishment of their great undertaking.

The contract called for the completion of the railway by May 1st, 1891. It was actually completed on November 7th, 1885. The North Shore Railway, connecting Montreal with Quebec, was acquired by the company in 1882. Between 1881 and 1884 branch lines totalling 471 miles were added to the system in Manitoba, and from time to time various leased lines were acquired in the older provinces. The capital stock of the company had been fixed at $100,000,000, and it was expected that any additional amount required to complete the road could easily be raised from land sales or upon the security of the land grant. But the lands were not readily sold in competition with Government homesteads; and although land-grant bonds were received at $1.10 for the company's lands, they could not be freely negotiated. In 1883, the company purchased from the Govern-

ment a guarantee of 3 per cent. per annum for ten years for the $65,000,000 of stock then sold, and made similar provision for the $35,000,000 still unsold. The cost of this terminable annuity was $16,000,000, calculated at 4 per cent., to meet semi-annual payments of $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. Of this amount $8,710,240 was paid in cash, and security given for the early payment of the balance.

Still the stock could not be sold at a satisfactory figure, and further public support became necessary. In 1884, the Government induced Parliament to loan the company $22,500,000. This, added to the balance due upon the annuity purchase, created a total debt to the country of $29,880,000, and to secure this amount the Government took a lien upon the entire property of the company. In consideration of this loan the syndicate undertook to complete the road by May 1st, 1886, and construction proceeded at the rate of five hundred miles yearly. This necessitated an enormous annual outlay, and as a natural consequence the loan was soon exhausted, while the first lien of the Government on all the company's property prevented sale of their stock. They found it necessary, therefore, to make a further appeal to the Government. Accordingly, in 1885 the $35,000,000 of unsold stock in the hands of the Government was cancelled, and an equal amount of 5 per cent. first mortgage bonds was issued. The $29,880,000 of indebtedness to the country was made payable on May 1st, 1891,

with 4 per cent. interest. The Government accepted $20,000,000 of the first mortgage bonds as security for that amount of the debt, and the security of all the unsold lands of the company for the balance of $9,880,000. Of the $15,000,000 bonds remaining, the company deposited with the Government $8,000,000 as security for a temporary loan of $5,000,000. The remainder they negotiated, and within a few months paid back the temporary loan, and thus released $8,000,000 of bonds. In March, 1886, the company returned all the cash advanced under the $20,000,000 bonds, and surrendered 6,793,-014 acres of land at $1.50 per acre for the balance. The Government at this time also surrendered $5,000,000 of land-grant bonds held as security for the continuous operation of the railway as provided in the original contract.

In 1888, still another transaction between the company and the Government became necessary. In order to release the West from the provision against the construction of competing roads west of Lake Superior, the country guaranteed the interest for fifty years on an issue of $15,000,000 of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. bonds secured upon the 15,000,000 acres of unsold lands belonging to the company. This final rearrangement of the financial terms was forced by the determined struggle of Manitoba to secure the entrance into that province of the Northern Pacific, and to wrest absolute railway freedom from the federal authority. Sixty-five millions

of stock were issued during the progress of construction. This realized only $31,000,000, and of this amount $21,000,000 were used to pay and secure dividends. The ordinary stock was issued in three series. The first issue was for $5,000,000 at par to the original shareholders. The next was for $20,000,000. This was issued at 25 cents on the dollar, and thus realized only $5,000,000 of genuine capital. The third of $40,000,000, issued at 52½ cents, realized $21,000,000 in cash. The actual cash which the stock represents may be thus recapitulated:

	Stock.	Equal to Cash.
First issue	$5,000,000	$5,000,000
Second issue	20,000,000	5,000,000
Third issue	40,000,000	21,000,000
Total	$65,000,000	$31,000,000

Speaking in Parliament in 1885, Mr. Blake pointed out that the Government had built and handed over to the company 641 miles of completed railway, besides the Pembina branch, at an estimated cost of $30,000,000. The Government surveys had cost $3,440,000. The Government subsidy was $25,000,000 in cash. There was realized from land-grant bonds, from town sites, and from other minor sources of income, $11,000,000. This made $69,500,000, besides which there remained 20,000,000 acres of land. Estimating the land at $1 per acre, the company received in public aids—not loans, but gifts—$89,500,000. If the land was valued at $2, $109,500,000 were obtained. The

loans of 1884 amounted to $29,810,000. Then there were gifts as before, $69,500,000; loans, $29,810,000, or cash aids of $99,310,000. Adding the 20,000,000 acres of land at $2, a total of gifts and loans of $139,310,000 was obtained. The cost of the whole line, according to the company's own estimate, was $83,500,000; the equipment, $8,000,000; the total, $91,500,000. The road was to be the property of the company. Both the company and the Government declared that it would pay from the day it was opened. Canada had provided the means, and far more than the means, to build the road; the First Minister said that it would carry freights at one-fourth the cost of other roads; a road that could do that would certainly be a highly paying concern. Mr. Blake also pointed out that the $5,000,000 to be given the company by the resolutions under discussion would increase the public aid to the project to $144,810,000, estimating the land at $2 per acre; and that $13,827,000 more would have to be spent in aiding the construction of the railway through Maine to the Atlantic seaboard, and other roads connected with the transcontinental railway project.

Dealing with the financial methods of the company, Mr. Blake pointed out that by the system of finance adopted, they had raised on stock $24,500,000, and had devoted to dividends $21,000,000. This gave $3,500,000 to go on with the work, and $21,000,000 to go into their own pockets. What,

he asked, was the amount they had actually paid in dividends up to February, 1885? On the first $5,000,000 they had paid $1,000,000; on the $20,000,000, which represented $5,000,000 cash, they had paid $2,610,000; on the $30,000,000, representing $15,281,000, they had paid $2,640,000; and on the balance, $10,000,000, representing $4,212,000, they had paid $750,000, or a total of $7,000,000 already paid in cash to shareholders by this embarrassed company, which had to come to Parliament for help in their urgent need. And having paid $7,000,000 in cash, they had then deposited with the Government, at 4 per cent. interest, $14,100,000 to secure future dividends. The original proprietors, who took the additional $20,000,000 of stock, had received, on their $5,000,000 of cash, for part of the time 24 per cent. per annum on their investment, and for the rest 20 per cent. They had received $3,610,000 in dividends already, and were to get in eight years and a half $6,875,000 more, or $10,485,000 in dividends, apart altogether from the road, the land, and the earnings of the road on $10,000,000 of capital. If the calculation were made to include the September, 1885, and February, 1886, extra dividends, there would have been paid and provided for dividends $24,875,000, or a sum equal to the whole amount realized from the sale of the company's stock. The shareholders would have paid $24,500,000 for their stock, and there would have been paid and provided for dividends

an equal amount. The net result of the transaction had been to invest money with one hand for the purpose of taking it out with the other. In substance, the proceeds of the stock had been divided among the stockholders. The Government had to raise the money to build the road, and the country would have to pay the tolls for all time in order to pay dividends upon the stock so divided. All this was to be done because the stockholders in this enterprise had realized from $60,000,000 of stock $24,500,000, and had chosen to appropriate $24,-500,000 to pay dividends upon their stock.[1] It may here be added that in 1885 the stock of the company which now sells at 135 sold as low as 35¾.

The various rearrangements of the terms between the Government and the syndicate were vigorously and determinedly opposed by the Liberal party under Mr. Blake's leadership, and in many of the debates Mr. Laurier intervened with thoughtful and eloquent speeches. But with the country committed to the construction of the railway by the syndicate, the Government was almost bound to carry the enterprise to a successful issue. Ministers, however, could have used the various crises in the affairs of the company to force a modification of the more obnoxious terms of the original bargain, to break up their land monopoly, restrict their exemptions, and regain the free right of control over freight and passenger charges. It has to be re-

[1] Hansard, June 17th, 1885, pages 2,612, 2,619.

membered, however, that the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway was a formidable undertaking, and that only capitalists of extraordinary courage and of extraordinary resource would have dared to embark in the enterprise. From Vancouver to Fort William the road ran through nearly two thousand miles of territory with a scanty and scattered population. There were few important business centres, and a limited local traffic. There were five or six hundred miles of barren and unsettled country along the north shore of Lake Superior. For through traffic there was the keen competition of the American railways, and of the Grand Trunk, with its American connections. Construction on the Lake Superior and mountain sections was enormously costly, and the cost of operation very heavy. There were powerful reasons why the road should be extended through older Canada, its American connections established, and its trans-Pacific steamship service inaugurated. It could not exist upon its local traffic, and these extensions and developments were necessary to its success, even to its existence as a commercial enterprise. In fact, the operation of this great railway for the first ten years of its history was a much greater achievement than its construction. It was possible to induce Parliament to build the road with public money. It was not possible to induce the country to operate the road at the public expense for the benefit of a private corporation.

The sanguine expectations of rapid settlement of the West fell lamentably short of realization. The early eighties witnessed a tremendous boom in Manitoba; but the era of inflation was brief and frenzied, and the results disastrous and enduring. Millions of acres of land were granted to colonization companies. There was an immense waste of the public resources upon eager speculators and greedy partisans. There was a season of delirious gambling in prairie lots, a frantic competition in the plotting of paper towns, a reckless trading on the future that occasioned widespread loss and ruin, and put a positive blight upon the country for years afterward. We wasted our patrimony in the West as a spendthrift wastes a fortune, and created some grave problems for other generations. As the Hon. Clifford Sifton told Parliament a few years ago: "We have 67,000,000 acres of land in Manitoba and the North-West Territories reserved from settlement. On that 67,000,000 of acres, I, as the Minister of the Interior to-day, cannot give a man a homestead entry. Nor can I sell a single acre of it, although there are millions of acres of that land that never have been and never will be nor can be earned by any railway company. But they are reserved by order in Council, the good faith of the Dominion is pledged to that forever, and no Government can interfere with that reserve until the bond is literally fulfilled to the last letter."[1]

[1] Hansard, February 16th, 1898.

When the charter was granted to the syndicate, it was popularly understood that the exemption from taxation was to run for only twenty years, but it is now held that the exemption obtains until the patent is issued to the settler upon railway lands. The clause in the charter reads: "The lands of the company in the North-West Territories, until they are either sold or occupied, shall also be free from such taxation for twenty years after the grant thereof from the Crown." If the latter interpretation holds good, the clause has the same effect as if it had simply declared the land free from taxation until sold or occupied. Hence, the land question may yet become as crucial and as menacing to the peace of the West as Mr. Laurier predicted. Since 1896, however, the taxable area of the West has been materially increased. Over 10,000,000 acres of railway lands have been patented, and except where positive exemptions exist, the municipalities have been encouraged to assert the right of taxation over unoccupied areas. The Dominion Government has also offered to aid any western municipality in carrying a case through the courts to determine when the Canadian Pacific reserves become subject to taxation, while properly refusing to ask Parliament to give an arbitrary interpretation to this clause of the railway contract.

There is an excellent prospect that the right of public regulation of charges over the whole Canadian Pacific system will soon be regained. In

1897, Parliament granted to the company aid to the extent of $11,000 per mile, or not exceeding in the whole, $3,630,000, towards the construction of a railway from Lethbridge, in the district of Alberta, through the Crow's Nest Pass to Nelson, in British Columbia. The agreement provided for a reduction of rates on many staple articles of consumption in the West, and reduced the tolls on grain and flour three cents per hundred pounds, half of the reduction to be made in 1898, and half in 1899. It gave running powers over the new road, and all its branches and connections, to competing railways; and subjected to public regulation freight rates on all shipments originating on the Crow's Nest Pass road, or destined for points on the road and its branches. Then, in the session of Parliament just closed, the company were authorized to increase their capital stock from $65,000,000 to $85,000,000. It was stipulated that this stock should be issued at par, and should not affect the clause in the original contract providing for conditional immunity from public control. It is understood that $9,000,000 will be used for locomotives, cars, and other equipment; $2,000,000 for the enlargement and construction of repair shops at Montreal and other points on the system; $6,000,000 for the reduction of grades, improvements of alignment, and double-tracking; and $3,000,000 for additional grain elevators, terminals, sidings and other necessary facilities to meet the increasing business of the country. The

company also agreed to a reference to the Supreme Court, or if necessary to the Judicial Committee of the Imperial Privy Council, in order to determine the exact bearing of the section in the original contract which prohibits reduction of their charges until their earnings reach 10 per cent. on the amount expended in construction; or in other words, to determine the amount actually and legitimately expended in the construction of the railway.

The Western land policy of the Government and the bargain with the Canadian Pacific syndicate were outstanding issues in the election campaign of 1882, and on both counts Mr. Blake laid formidable indictments against the Administration.[1] He, however, found it difficult to interest older Canada in the technical details of the land regulations, while the bulk of financial and commercial opinion was undoubtedly favourable to the railway contract. The extraordinary features of the bargain were recognized, but they were thought to be measurably offset by the magnitude of the undertaking. The commercial community were eager to have the road constructed, and there was a considerable degree of public faith in the ability of Mr.

[1] "I challenge the North-West land policy of the Government, which has in various forms given facilities for speculation, whereby great areas of the choicest lands are falling into the hands of middlemen, who will hold them until they exact from the immigrant large profits, thus at once retarding the development of the country and lessening the prosperity of the settler. Our motto is: 'The land for the settler, the price for the public.'"—Hon. Edward Blake's address to the electors of West Durham, May 23rd, 1882.

Stephen and his associates to carry through the undertaking. Mr. Mackenzie's plan of utilizing the water stretches as essential parts of the system of through communication with the West seemed to suggest timid counsels and patchwork methods, and had only the hesitating support of many Liberals; while the plan of rapid all-rail connection, provided in the bargain with the syndicate, was thorough and heroic to the last degree. The West was as indifferent as the East to the certain evils of land monopoly and freight monopoly, which were inherent in the contract. In fact, the long and resolute opposition which the Liberal party offered to many features of the bargain brought down upon the Liberal leaders the enduring displeasure of the Western communities, and now when twenty years have passed there is the very irony of fate in the attacks which are made upon the Liberal party for the existence of the evils which they strove so hard to minimize and avert.[1]

[1] Morgan's *Annual Register* for 1879 and 1880 deals in considerable detail with the various proposals for construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway. The financial features of the enterprise are presented in an address delivered by Mr. Thomas C. Keefer, President of the American Society of Civil Engineers, and reprinted in the Statistical Year-Book of Canada for 1894. Mr. Alexander Begg's "History of the North-West" enters exhaustively into the whole story of the great undertaking.

CHAPTER XV

THE BATTLE FOR PROVINCIAL RIGHTS

PUBLIC opinion in Ontario was much more deeply excited during the campaign of 1882 by the startling redistribution of constituencies which the Government forced through Parliament on the eve of dissolution. In order to increase the representation of Ontario from eighty-eight to ninety-two members, the whole political map of the province was altered almost beyond recognition. Respect for county boundaries which had obtained in former readjustments of population, and which principle represented the declared policy of Sir John Macdonald, was ruthlessly disregarded.[1] Townships were boldly torn from their natural municipal and historical relationships, thrown, regardless of their proper geographical connections, into new electoral divisions, and the constituencies fashioned to the direct aggrandizement

[1] When Sir John Macdonald brought in his bill for the readjustment of the constituencies in 1872, he said: "The desire of the Government has been to preserve the representations for counties and sub-divisions of counties as much as possible. . . . It is desired as much as possible to keep the representation within the county, so that each county that is a municipality of Ontario shall be represented, and if it becomes large enough, divide it into two ridings. . . . It is, I think, a grand system that the people of Canada should have the opportunity of choosing for political promotion the men in whom they

of the Conservative party with an audacity unprecedented in Canadian politics. Great bunches of Liberal voters were hived in particular districts, the natural voting strength of the Liberal party was materially weakened, and the Liberal leaders, with rare exceptions, were forced to face hostile majorities in their old electoral divisions, or rather in the new constituencies constructed upon the partisan specifications of their political opponents. In one of his speeches during the campaign, Sir John Macdonald said: "The Grits complain that they are hived all together. It seems they do not like the association. I told my constituents the other day—well, I hope, indeed I know they will be my constituents—a story. When the Reform Club was built in London it was the finest club-house there, and the club-room was really a magnificent chamber. Theodore Hook, who was a great wit, and the editor of a Tory paper, was taken into the Reform Club by a friend who desired to show him the place. When he was in the club-room, the friend

have the most confidence and of whose abilities they are fully assured. All that great advantage is lost by cutting off a portion of two separate counties and adding them together for electoral purposes only. Those portions so cut off have no common interest. They do not meet together, and they have no common feeling, except that once in five years they go to the polls in their own township to vote for a man who may be known in the one section and not in the other. This tends towards the introduction of the American system of caucuses, by which wire-pullers take adventurers for their political ability only, and not for any personal respect for them. . . . When the representation is increased it should be by sub-dividing the counties into ridings."

said: 'Well, how do you like our room?' Said Hook: 'I would rather have your room than your company.' So it is with the Grits. They do not like each other's company. They like to associate with Conservative gentlemen such as you. Your being with them rather gives tone to their society."[1]

The readjustment struck directly at the Hon. Alexander Mackenzie, Sir Richard Cartwright, the Hon. David Mills, Mr. William Paterson, Mr. George W. Ross, Mr. M. C. Cameron, and other of the more active spirits of the Liberal party. But it is satisfactory to remember that at least for the moment the conspiracy was much less successful than its authors expected. In later years, however, when public indignation over the measure had subsided, the vicious readjustment of 1882 proved a serious handicap to the Liberal party in Ontario.[2] With the exception of the Dominion Franchise Act of 1885, no other measure of equal partisan enormity has been introduced into the Parliament of Canada. Mr. Laurier loyally supported his colleagues from the sister province in their energetic protest against this audacious measure, and when he was returned to power, sought by a fair and equitable measure of redistribution to restore equal political rights to the Liberals of Ontario. He was blocked

[1] Speech at the Amphitheatre, Toronto, May 30th, 1882.

[2] Mackenzie, Mills, Paterson, Ross, and Cameron were all elected in 1882 in the gerrymandered ridings. Cartwright, whose old constituency of Centre Huron was abolished, ran in Centre Wellington, and was defeated.

by the Senate, which accepted the Act of 1882 with amiable docility. Indeed since the very organization of the commonwealth the Senate has proceeded on the principle that to question the expediency and justice of Conservative legislation is flagrant treason to British institutions in North America. But the day of redress and restitution cannot be much longer postponed, even by a Senate whose chief function is to prevent the hasty repeal of bad enactments, and all Canadians will hope that the next readjustment of the constituencies will be as conspicuous for justice and fair dealing as that of 1882 was remarkable for contempt of sound public opinion and bold disregard of the rights of the political minority.[1]

The dispute, long, tortuous, and acrimonious, over the boundaries of Ontario, was likewise an active factor in the elections of 1882. According to the award made in 1878 by Chief-Justice Harrison, Sir Edward Thornton, and Sir Francis Hincks, the territory of Ontario extended north to Albany River, west to the Lake of the Woods, and southwards to the Minnesota boundary. Mr. Mackenzie passed out of office before this decision could be ratified by the federal Parliament, and direct parliamentary ratification was refused by Sir John Mac-

[1]The redistribution bill presented to Parliament by the Liberal Government in 1899 strictly observed county boundaries, and provided that in such counties as were entitled to two or three representatives, the boundaries of the various ridings should be delimited by Superior Court judges.

donald.[1] For years the question remained a bone of contention between the Liberal party and the Conservative party, and between Ontario as represented by Sir Oliver Mowat, and the Dominion as represented by the Conservative leader. Various propositions were made by the federal Ministers for a further arbitration, or an appeal to the courts under various conditions and limitations. All were resisted and rejected by the provincial Ministers. As a last resort, in 1881, Sir John Macdonald introduced and put through Parliament an Act extending the boundaries of Manitoba, and declaring that the eastern boundary of that province should be "a line drawn due north from where the westerly boundary of the Province of Ontario intersects the international boundary line dividing Canada from the United States of America." This Act, of deliberate design, did not undertake to define the easterly boundary of Manitoba. The purpose was to embroil Manitoba in the dispute, and to force a conflict of jurisdiction between the two provinces. As a result, something like an incipient rebellion arose out of the rival attempts of the officers of Ontario and Manitoba to exercise authority in the disputed territory.

[1] "I never dreamed for a moment—whether I had succeeded again in controlling the legislation of the country or not,—I did not believe that any Government would have dared to avoid giving effect to any arbitration solemnly entered into between the two Governments."—Hon. Alexander Mackenzie, in the House of Commons, March 31st, 1882.

The Dominion Government also undertook to deal with timber limits and mineral rights in the district. Sir John Macdonald laid claim to the land, timber, and minerals, in virtue of the extinguishment of the Indian title by the Dominion, and parcelled out great tracts of the territory under federal licenses. In one of his speeches the Conservative leader said: "The disputed territory was either in Manitoba or in Ontario. Manitoba was now being settled by the sons of Ontario citizens, and it was of no consequence whether that territory belonged to Ontario or to her sons. As a lawyer—and he had never given a constitutional opinion that was not sustained by the highest tribunals in the Empire—as a lawyer, he told them that the award had no validity whatever, and was simply a piece of waste paper and would not decide the question." He added that if all the territory which Mr. Mowat claimed were awarded to Ontario, there was not one stick of timber, one acre of land, or one lump of lead, iron or gold, that did not belong to the Dominion, or to people who had purchased from the Dominion Government.[1]

The dispute had not reached the last critical stages during the election of 1882, but the controversy was keen and bitter, and partook somewhat of the nature of a personal struggle between Mr. Mowat and Sir John Macdonald. The provincial Ministers stood firmly upon the award of 1878, and

[1] Speech at the Amphitheatre, Toronto, May 30th, 1882.

they received the faithful and energetic support of the Liberal leaders in the House of Commons. Mr. Laurier, speaking on a resolution by Mr. J. B. Plumb, of Niagara, proposing to refer the question to the Supreme Court of Canada or to the Imperial Privy Council for a final decision, and pending the reference to vest the administration of the lands in a joint commission to be appointed by the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario,[1] took the simple and natural position that an award of arbitrators is binding on both parties, and cannot be questioned except for cause. The arbitrators were appointed under sufficient parliamentary authority, the decision reached was of the nature of a legal judgment rather than a compromise, and the award should be received by both parties and carried out in its entirety. He said: "If you deny Ontario the boundary she claims, she may deny Quebec her northern boundary, and those sectional cries, which at one time were thought to be forever destroyed, would be renewed. The question having been settled ought to remain settled. There is no occasion to open it anew. I do not fear the appeal that will be made against me in my own province on the vote I intend giving. I have no hesitation in saying this award is binding on both parties, and ought to be carried out in good faith. The consideration that the great Province of Ontario will be made greater I altogether lay aside as unfair,

[1] Hansard, March 31st, 1882, page 665.

unfriendly, and unjust."[1] Dealing with this speech, the Toronto *Globe* said: "To the credit of Mr. Laurier it must be said that he had the courage of his convictions, and rose superior to prejudices and fears. He both spoke and voted against the Government's fatuous proposal, and by so doing invited a comparison between himself and the Ontario supporters of the Government by no means flattering to the latter."[2]

Two years before this speech was made, Mr. Laurier had voted against the appointment of a committee to investigate the award, and in consequence was violently attacked by his political opponents in Quebec. This speech led to a renewal of the attack, if indeed it had ever been quite abandoned; and it was vehemently represented that he was prepared to sacrifice the interests of his own province for the sake of Ontario. On the other hand, the incurable suspicion that Quebec is eternally plotting to impair the political power of Ontario found frequent and violent expression during the contest. It was argued that as Quebec had opposed representation by population in order to hold an equal share of power in the old Parliament of United Canada, and had opposed Confederation as calculated to diminish her authority and imperil French Canadian institutions, so she now sought to prevent ratification of the Ontario boundary award,

[1] Hansard, April 4th, 1882.

[2] Editorial in the Toronto *Globe*, April 6th, 1882.

to reduce the proper area of the English province, and to deprive her of opportunity for future expansion and increase of representation in the federal Parliament. It may be that provocation came from the *Bleus* of Quebec, and even many French Liberals voted against the ratification of the award. But Liberals in Ontario seemed not unwilling to renew the old racial quarrel, and as a result interprovincial relations were greatly embittered by the controversy, and the Conservative party derived material advantage from the situation.[1]

In the Commons in 1882, Mr. Tasse, an influential Conservative journalist, and one of the Conservative members for Ottawa, challenged the attitude of the Liberal press and the Liberal party of Ontario, and entered into an elaborate argument to show that Quebec did not seek to dominate the Confederation, that the English minority of the province received ample justice at the hands of the French and Catholic majority, and that the only object of Liberals was to divert attention from

[1] Sir John Macdonald, finding himself compelled at length to make a declaration of his policy in the face of the pending election, throws off the mask, and his answer to the demands of Ontario for her rights is: "Not one stick of timber, one acre of land, one lump of lead, iron or gold." This is final and conclusive. This is the *Bleu* ultimatum. Ontario is to be robbed of territory, until she is reduced to half the size of Quebec, and her magnificent resources taken away from her, because our prosperity excites the malignant envy of the French *Bleus*, and our annual surpluses offer so striking a contrast to their empty treasury and heavy taxation.—Editorial in the Toronto *Globe*, June 2nd, 1882.

legitimate public issues, and excite sectional jealousies against the Government. He described the French Liberals in Parliament as "the much mutilated band from Lower Canada," and declared his surprise that the Liberal party received any support at all in the Province of Quebec. He charged that in order to reach power the Liberal party were ready "to sow the seeds of civil war, to set province against province, creed against creed, Englishmen against Frenchmen, to shake the very foundations of our political system, to break up the union."[1]

In the course of his reply, Mr. Laurier said that if the Liberal press of Ontario made appeals to the prejudices of the people, Mr. Tasse did right to denounce them, and he could only wish that the Conservative party in Quebec would profess the principles which Mr. Tasse professed in Parliament. He said: "The Liberal party of the Province of Quebec have no reason to feel ashamed of their position. If we are but few in this House to-day it is because we have been decimated in defence of a noble cause, because we have defended freedom and constitutional government against the attack of the party to which he belongs. . . . If we are decimated, is it not due to the fact that the press and the party to which he belongs have always traded on the prejudices of our people? The honourable gentleman and his party would not have a

[1] Hansard, April 25th, 1882.

standing in this House were it not that for the last twenty-five years they never dared to meet us on political questions, but have always appealed to the prejudices of our countrymen. Who can deny the fact? The honourable gentleman objects to the remark I made somewhere, that if Baldwin and Lafontaine came back to this country they would not recognize the party to which they belonged as their party. Can the charge be denied? Is it not a fact that the press to which the honourable gentleman belongs has always represented it a heresy to belong to the Liberal party or to be called a Liberal? When we attack the Government, when we condemn their principles, when we try to engage them in a battle on political grounds in the Province of Quebec, we are always met with the same cry. These gentlemen are enemies of your religion, they are Liberals, and it is not possible for a Catholic to be a Liberal. How often have we not found these words in the press of the honourable gentleman? How often could I not find them, if I had time, in the very paper of which he is the editor? It is because of such cries that we are so few here to-day. But, as I said before, few as we are, I would rather stand here a defender of the rights obtained for us by our fathers than belong to the so-called Conservative party of the Province of Quebec."[1]

Finally, upon a joint case submitted by Ontario and Manitoba, the award of the arbitrators was

[1] Hansard, April 25th, 1882.

upheld by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, the constitutional position of the Liberals signally vindicated, and Ontario secured in the possession of territory vastly richer in timber, in minerals, and in cultivable soil, than even the most optimistic of her champions then believed. The long and determined resistance of Sir John Macdonald to ratification of the award, was, however, not wholly barren of result. He, at least, forced a reference to the Judicial Committee, and to that extent could claim a party triumph.

The attempt to establish federal jurisdiction over the retail liquor trade was also a legacy from the general election of 1882, and another incident in the long duel between Sir Oliver Mowat and Sir John Macdonald. During the campaign the Conservative leader threatened to wrest the licensing power from the Ontario Government, and at the next session of the Dominion Parliament an Act was passed taking power to create license districts; to appoint commissioners for such districts; to issue through such commissioners, hotel, saloon, shop, vessel and wholesale licenses; and generally to assume the control over the liquor trade hitherto exercised by the provincial authorities. It is perhaps not wide of the mark to say that the chief design of this law was to increase the patronage of federal Ministers, or rather to limit the patronage exercised by the Liberal Government of Ontario.[1] It was the pro-

[1] If he carried the country, as he would do, he would tell Mr.

duct of intense political partisanship, and but served to throw the liquor business into confusion in every province of the Dominion. Looking at such questions from the standpoint of a convinced and logical federalist, Mr. Laurier never found it difficult to choose his position. He denounced the bill as a step towards legislative union, and still another development of Sir John Macdonald's sustained attempt to destroy the federal character of the Constitution, and reduce the local Legislatures to the position of costly ornaments.[1] But this Act was as short-lived as it was mischievous. Two years after its adoption, the Privy Council declared that it was not within the legislative authority of the Parliament of Canada, and the control of the liquor trade, properly and advantageously, reverted to the several provinces.

One other measure designed to increase the patronage of the Conservative party and aggrandize the federal authority at the expense of the Legislatures, dates back to this period of intense political rancour. It was intimated in the Speech from the Throne in 1885, that Parliament would be asked to consider a measure relating to the representation of the people, and for the assimilation of the electoral

Mowat, that little tyrant who had attempted to control public opinion by getting hold of every little office, from that of a Division Court bailiff to a tavern-keeper, that he would get a bill passed at Ottawa returning to the municipalities the power taken away from them by the License Act.—From a speech by Sir John Macdonald at Yorkville, June 1st, 1882.

[1] Hansard, March 18th, 1884.

franchises of the several provinces. This was the last of many intimations that Sir John Macdonald had such a measure under consideration. Six times, in fact, the bill was introduced in Parliament. In 1870 it was carried through a second reading and then abandoned in committee in face of a motion by Mr. Dorion declaring for adhesion to the provincial franchises. As now presented, it was one of the most objectionable bills ever submitted to a free Parliament. It was proposed to establish a uniform franchise throughout the Dominion, to appoint federal officers for the preparation and revision of the lists, and to enfranchise the Indian population.[1] There was nothing in the bill to prevent the appointment of the most active Conservative partisans as revising officers, who were empowered to make as well as to revise the lists, and

[1] Mr. Mills.—What we are anxious to know is whether the honourable gentleman proposes to give other than enfranchised Indians votes.

Sir John Macdonald.—Yes.

Mr. Mills.—Indians residing on a reservation?

Sir John Macdonald.—Yes, if they have the necessary property qualificaton.

Mr. Mills.—An Indian who cannot make a contract for himself, who can neither buy nor sell without the consent of the Superintendent General, an Indian who is not enfranchised?

Sir John Macdonald.—Whether he is enfranchised or not.

Mr. Mills.—This will include Indians in Manitoba and British Columbia?

Sir John Macdonald.—Yes.

Mr. Mills.—Poundmaker and Big Bear?

Sir John Macdonald.—Yes.

Mr. Mills.—So that they can go from a scalping party to the polls. —Hansard, April 30th, 1885.

whose judgment as to the qualifications of voters was final and absolutely unappealable. The Liberal party resolved that the measure, as presented, should not go through Parliament. They resorted to a deliberate policy of obstruction, and adopted every device that the forms of Parliament would permit to block its progress. They divided into relays, and while one contingent slept the other kept the debate going. They forced as many as twenty-five divisions at one sitting. They read whole books to the Speaker, and spoke for hours, even for days, on the most insignificant details of the measure.

Mr. Laurier was not one of the more active of the obstructionists, but he was in thorough sympathy with the policy of his associates. He denounced the bill as bad in principle and vicious in intention. He moved, perhaps, the chief amendment submitted from the Liberal benches, declaring for the practice which had prevailed ever since Confederation of utilizing for federal elections the provincial franchise and voters' lists. He said the bill took the preparation of the lists out of the hands of the people, and turned the work over to the henchmen and parasites of the Government. The Constitution was based upon diversity, and we had neither uniformity of territory, of population, nor of institutions. We had seven different communities, and it was best that the right to determine the franchise should be left to each community. Prince Edward

Island had manhood suffrage, Quebec did not desire manhood suffrage, and it was neither necessary nor expedient to enlarge the one franchise nor restrict the other in disregard of local sentiment. The bill was bad from every conceivable standpoint, and would destroy a system which had given great and uniform satisfaction. It was an attack on the federal principle, an invasion of popular rights, a step towards centralization, and opposed to the steady conviction of the country that the provincial franchise was the best suited to our institutions, and under all the circumstances was best adapted to the character of our people.[1]

The memorable fight of the Liberal party against the bill greatly influenced public opinion and forced the Government to make many important amendments. The enfranchisement of the Indians of Manitoba, the Territories, and British Columbia was prevented. The income franchise and the property qualifications were reduced. Wage-earners were enfranchised. The right of appeal from revising barristers to judges was secured. The principle of uniformity of franchise for all the provinces was abandoned by the authors of the measure from the sheer impossibility of giving effect to their chief argument for its necessity. In operation the Act inflicted grave injustice upon the Liberal party, and enormously increased the cost and labour of political contests. Time and again,

[1] Hansard, April 17th, 1885.

owing to the great outlay the system imposed upon political candidates and their agents, its operation was suspended, and it became necessary to use lists two, three, and even four years old for the purposes of bye-elections. It was never a popular measure, even with the masses of the Conservative party, and more than once influential Conservatives joined in the demand for its repeal. It was one of the first of the abuses to be struck down by the Laurier Administration, and not even the Senate could be persuaded to destroy the Act which decreed its abolition. Thus the last of all that series of measures designed by Sir John Macdonald to circumscribe the functions of the Legislatures and degrade the provincial authority joined its predecessors in the common grave of unconstitutional, impracticable, and undesirable enactments.

CHAPTER XVI

THE NORTH-WEST REBELLION

IT will be remembered that the amnesty granted to Louis Riel by the Mackenzie Government was conditional upon five years' banishment from the soil of Canada. In consequence of this sentence he had settled in Montana; but few in older Canada understood how much his name was still cherished by the half-breeds of the West, or had any adequate conception of the conditions which were slowly breeding the temper of revolt in the Metis, and surely threatening the peace of the country. Under the Manitoba Act there was granted to every half-breed born in the province before July 1st, 1870, 240 acres of land in extinguishment of the Indian title. No provision, however, was made for the half-breeds of the Territories, and it was natural that they also should demand free homesteads and look for as favourable treatment as was extended to the Metis of Manitoba.

As early as 1875 they petitioned for such recognition. As the years passed their surroundings grew more unsatisfactory and their demands more urgent. From the first their claim was strongly supported by the North-West Council. It was represented by the Council that in view of the Manitoba grants

there would be general dissatisfaction among the half-breeds of the Territories if they did not receive like consideration. Grants of land were therefore recommended, subject to such conditions as would prevent improvident alienation and secure the permanent interest of the half-breed settlements. It is clear that the argument for provision for the half-breeds of Manitoba was equally applicable to the half-breeds of the Territories. Settlement was extending westward. The buffalo had disappeared. Conditions of life on the plains were revolutionized. The Indians were settled on reserves, and guaranteed treaty payments. All the circumstances made prompt and adequate measures for the satisfaction of the half-breed demands an imperative national obligation. This would seem to have been the view of Sir John Macdonald, who had taken charge of the Indian department upon the defeat of the Mackenzie Government. He instructed Col. Dennis, the chief officer of the department, to make an investigation and report upon the claims and circumstances of the half-breed population. Col. Dennis's report gave unequivocal support to the petitions of the Metis and the representations of the North-West Council. The half-breeds, he said, had a claim to favourable consideration. There was uneasiness in consequence of the non-recognition of their demands. It was important to have that element of the population in sympathy with the Government when dealing with

the Plain tribes of Indians, and essential to cultivate and maintain such relations with both half-breeds and Indians as would attach them to Canada, and leave no doubt of the determination of the Government to fulfil its obligations towards them with the utmost good faith. Archdeacon McLean of the Anglican Church in the Territories strongly recommended a policy of conciliation.[1] Col. Richardson pointed out that the former occupation of the half-breeds was gone, and that they were as a class destitute and scattered among the Indians.[2]

Archbishop Taché, of St. Boniface, represented that a liberal policy towards the half-breeds would attract to the side of the Government a moral and physical power which in the critical relations of the various Indian tribes towards each other and towards the Government would prove of great value; while the half-breed element, if dissatisfied, would become a standing menace to the peace and prosperity of the Territories. He declared that it was largely owing to the influence of the half-breeds that we had encountered no formidable difficulties in dealing with the Indians. But with the disappearance of the buffalo, and the extension of settlement into the Indian country, the danger of Indian disturbances became imminent. It would now depend in a great measure on the treatment the half-breeds received whether or not this great peril could be

[1] Letter of January 18th, 1879.

[2] Letter of January 18th, 1880.

averted.[1] Both Col. Dennis and the Archbishop urged that the half-breed claims should be settled without further delay. Accordingly, in 1879, an Act was passed authorizing the Government to make such grants of land, and on such conditions as was thought expedient, to the half-breeds of the Territories in satisfaction of their claim for the extinguishment of the Indian title.

Thus far, as Mr. Blake said, the Government acted promptly and judiciously. But here action ceased. Here the energy of Ministers was exhausted. No step was taken under this legislation, and absolutely nothing done to investigate and satisfy the claims of the half-breeds until they broke out into actual revolt six years later. Time and again the Metis renewed their petitions. Time and again the North-West Council passed resolutions in support of their demands. Time and again bishops and clergy pleaded for action at Ottawa, and urged the dangers of delay. Ministers and officers of the Government passed up and down the West and heard the bitter story of the Metis grievances, and—forgot. At Qu'Appelle in 1884, Sir Hector Langevin received a deputation of these people, heard their complaint at first hand, and promised attention and consideration. The Toronto *Mail*, still the organ of the Administration, assessing responsibility upon the Mackenzie as well as upon the

[1] Letter of Archbishop Taché to Col. Dennis, Deputy Minister of the Interior, January 29th, 1879.

Macdonald Government, declared later that the negligence of the officials was "gross and inexcusable, and contributed to bring about the insurrection." "Had they," said *The Mail*, "had votes like white men, or if like the Indians they had been numerous enough to command respect and overcome red tape, without doubt the wheels of office would have revolved for them, but being only half-breeds they were put off with an eternal promise until patience ceased to be a virtue."[1] As in Manitoba in 1869, the work of the Dominion surveyors gave spur to the fear and irritation of the Metis. According to their custom they had settled along the rivers. Each farm had a narrow water frontage and extended far back in the form of a parallelogram. The Government system of surveys divided the country into square blocks, and thus rearranged and practically destroyed the Metis' holdings. This undoubted grievance, added to the failure to secure free homesteads, drove them to the verge of desperation, and at length led to Riel's recall from Montana.

Col. Geo. T. Denison, in his interesting reminiscences of soldiering in Canada, deals in blunt and straightforward fashion with the Government's responsibility for the subsequent outbreak. He declares that the rebellion was caused by "a remarkable instance of departmental inefficiency and stupidity." He describes the location of the half-

[1] Editorial in the Toronto *Mail*, July 8th, 1885.

breeds on the south branch of the Saskatchewan River, near Prince Albert, and explains that some had lived in the neighbourhood for many years, while others had gone in from Fort Garry during the years following the Red River rebellion. Their farms were laid out and fenced, their houses built, and the community enjoying comfort and prosperity, when the Government surveyors appeared and proceeded to survey the land according to the uniform plan adopted in the unsettled prairies. Then the half-breeds took alarm. They pleaded and protested. The danger, impolicy, and injustice of the proceeding was urgently represented to the department at Ottawa. But all without avail. As Col. Denison says: "One can easily understand the horror of the officials of the Department of the Interior at the suggestion that their uniform system of survey should be varied in the slightest degree. Such a breach of red tape regulations could not even be considered, so the complaints became more numerous and the department more obstinate. The months went on, nothing was done, and muttering threats were heard."

Mr. Charles Mair, one of the originators of the Canada First movement, had lived for some years at Prince Albert. He knew the temper of the half-breeds, and saw that rebellion was certain if their claims were not recognized. "For two years or more before the outbreak," Col. Denison proceeds, "he had come all the way from Prince

Albert to Ottawa, about 2,000 miles, of which 250 miles were travelled by waggon trail, to impress upon the Government the danger. He came about every six months, and was in the habit of staying a day or two with me on his way to Ottawa and on his way back. He told me each time he went down that there would be trouble; each succeeding visit he became more and more alarmed. He begged of the Government to make some concessions and warned them that there would be bloodshed." On one occasion he visited Ottawa at the head of a deputation from Prince Albert, and secured an interview with Sir John Macdonald, and also with Sir David Macpherson, who had succeeded to the office of Minister of the Interior. With full knowledge of the local conditions, and animated by no other object than to promote the contentment of the half-breeds and the security of the settlers, they laid all the facts before the Ministers, and urged prompt and adequate measures of concession and conciliation. Sir John Macdonald, at least, was impressed by their representations. He gave the deputation a patient and sympathetic hearing, and asked to have a written statement of the facts furnished for the consideration of the Government. Col. Denison says "Mair went back on that occasion more hopeful." But six months passed and nothing was done. In April, 1884, Mair came down once more and made a further appeal to the Government. Col. Denison continues: "When he

returned to Toronto from Ottawa he told me most positively that there would be a rebellion, that the officials were absolutely indifferent and immovable, and I could not help laughing at the picture he gave me of Sir David Macpherson, a very large, handsome, erect man of six feet four inches, getting up, leaving his room, and walking away down the corridor, while Mair, a short, stout man, had almost to run alongside of him, as he made his final appeal to preserve the peace and to prevent bloodshed."

Mr. Mair was then so thoroughly convinced that a rising was inevitable that he bought a house at Windsor, returned to Prince Albert, closed out his business, and in the month of September brought his family down to Ontario to await in safety the rebellion that he so clearly foresaw, and which a fatuous Administration would not lift a finger to avert. Not even yet, however, would Mair abandon his effort to rouse the Government to the necessity for remedial measures. In December he visited Ottawa once again, and made a final earnest but ineffectual attempt to open the eyes of Ministers to the imminent peril of insurrection which threatened the peace of the western country. Col. Denison satirically observes: "As he had no interest in the matter in dispute, and was anxious simply that there should be no disturbance, his representations should have received some attention, but I suppose it would have been unconstitutional for a Government to act upon the verbal report of an outsider. There

would be nothing to tie up neatly with red tape, and docket and file away in a pigeon hole."[1] These facts, as disclosed by Col. Denison, furnish, perhaps, the most conclusive evidence that has yet appeared in demonstration of the Government's responsibility for the North-West Rebellion. Nothing that was charged against the Administration by the spokesmen of the Liberal party, and nothing that the official documents reveal, more utterly condemns the Ministers who had the peace of the country in their keeping, or goes further in mitigation and justification of the leaders of the insurrection. Mair was neither a politician nor an agitator, and Col. Denison is an unprejudiced witness.[2]

It was under such circumstances, and as a last resort, that a deputation from the half-breeds of the St. Laurent settlement undertook a weary foot-journey of 700 miles into Montana, and persuaded Riel to return to Canada and lead the agitation for redress of their grievances and effectual recognition

[1] "Soldiering in Canada," by Lieut.-Col. Geo. T. Denison, pages 261-264.

[2] "The whole dispute was over some 40,000 or 50,000 acres of land, in a wilderness of tens of millions of acres, for which the Government were crying for settlers. It cost Canada the lives of two hundred of her people, the wounding of many others, the expenditure of about $6,000,000 in cash, and the losses of time and business that cannot be estimated. When it was all over, the Government offered free to the volunteers 1,800,000 acres of the land, if they wanted it to settle on; and yet the whole dispute was mainly about some red tape regulations as to surveying some forty or fifty thousand acres of land on which

of their demands. This deputation comprised James Isbester, Gabriel Dumont, Moïse Oullette, and Michel Dumas. Riel seems to have yielded readily to the prayer of the deputation. He set up a partnership in their grievances. He told them that he was himself entitled to land of which he had been deprived by the Canadian Government, and that his claim was still valid notwithstanding the fact that he had become an American citizen. He returned with the deputation, and at once entered upon an active organization of the half-breeds and a vigorous assertion of their demands. At a meeting held at St. Laurent in September, a Bill of Rights was formulated. This comprehensive and extravagant instrument demanded: (1) The sub-division into provinces of the North-West Territories; (2) such grants of lands for the half-breeds of the Territories as those of Manitoba had received; (3) the immediate issue of patents to the colonists in possession; (4) the sale of half a million acres of land and the application of the proceeds thereof to the establish-

people were already settled. It is not often a country suffers so severely and so unnecessarily. . . . The volunteer corps all over the country were volunteering their services, and using every effort to be sent up to the North-West. Several of my officers came to me and asked me if I had volunteered the services of the corps. I said, 'No, I had not.' They asked me if I would not do so. I refused for two reasons,—partly because a large force was being sent to crush a few people who had been wronged and practically goaded into rebellion, but my main reason was that if they thought I wanted to go they would certainly not send me. I also said that an officer should wait for his orders."—"Soldiering in Canada," by Lieut.-Col. Geo. T. Denison, pages 265-266.

ment in the half-breed settlements of schools and hospitals, and to the equipment of the poorer half-breeds with seed-grain, and implements; (5) the reservation of a hundred townships of swamp-land for distribution among the children of half-breeds for four succeeding generations; (6) a grant of at least $1,000 for the maintenance of an institution to be conducted by the nuns in each half-breed settlement; and (7) better provision for the support of the Indians.

The demands covered by the second and third paragraphs were supported by Bishop Grandin of St. Albert, and by the mass of the English-speaking settlers; and while other paragraphs of the resolution set up extraordinary claims, and one at least was deliberately designed to make mischief among the Indians, there is hardly any doubt that the prompt concession of free homesteads and the issue of patents to half-breeds in legitimate possession of holdings would have completely broken down the agitation, and left Riel disarmed and impotent to disturb the peace of the Territories. Riel assured Archbishop Taché that he would employ only constitutional means in order to secure a satisfactory adjustment of the half-breed claims by the federal authorities. But his bearing was forward and insolent. He resorted to menace and intimidation. His whole attitude was calculated to alienate public sympathy and obscure the substantial merits of the cause committed to his

guardianship. As yet, however, he had counselled no irremediable step, and it was still open to Ministers to take action under the legislation of 1879, and concede the measure of consideration to which the Metis were indubitably entitled. But the wheels of office would not revolve; Ministers and officials remained dumb, unresponsive, and inactive; and at last on March 26th, 1885, the sullen and desperate half-breeds forsook prayers, petitions, and remonstrances, and broke out into open revolt.

In anticipation of trouble, the mounted police force at Prince Albert was strengthened, a detachment was posted at Carlton, and 200 men of all ranks were distributed between Battleford, Carlton, Prince Albert, and Fort Pitt. It was reported from Carlton on March 10th that the half-breeds at Duck Lake and Batoche were organizing to stop the ingoing of supplies. On the next day, twenty-five police and a seven-pounder gun were ordered to proceed from Battleford to Carlton; while on the morning of March 18th, ninety men started out from Regina for the centre of disaffection. On March 17th, a meeting of half-breeds was held at St. Laurent, at which a provisional Government was formed, with Louis Riel as President, and Gabriel Dumont as Adjutant-General. This Government proceeded to seize stores, take prisoners, and terrorize the district. Riel demanded the unconditional surrender of Carlton, and in case of refusal threatened a war of extermination. The

Duck Lake Post, with all the Government and Indian supplies therein, was captured by the insurgents. In an attempt to recover the post and to secure the arms and ammunition, a detachment of police and a company of Prince Albert volunteers were routed by a superior force of half-breeds and Indians. Twelve of the police and volunteers were killed, and as many wounded.

The news of this disaster created intense excitement throughout the country, and moved the Government to prompt and vigorous measures for the suppression of the revolt. The 90th battalion of Winnipeg was started for the front with admirable despatch, and the call which went out to the volunteers of the older provinces was answered with an enthusiasm and patriotic ardour which revealed an unsuspected intensity and unity of national feeling. In Quebec as in Ontario, the troops got into marching order with splendid alacrity. Their departure for the West evoked extraordinary demonstrations of popular enthusiasm. On the north shore of Lake Superior the men had to cross over 100 miles of uncompleted sections of the railway in sleighs and flat-cars during the bitter weather of March and early April, and the spirit and endurance they manifested under the trying circumstances were but typical of their admirable bearing and behaviour all through the campaign. It may seem now that the country made very formidable preparations against a few hundred, or at most a few thousand

half-breeds. But it was not fear of the half-breeds that sent the shock of alarm throughout Canada. It was the knowledge of the great influence the half-breeds exercised over the Indians, and the danger of a sympathetic Indian rising, which gave the insurrection its formidable aspect, and made it the imperative duty of the Government to send out a force far beyond the needs of the moment.

Older Canada, indeed, was filled with wild rumours and alarming speculations. As early as March 13th, Superintendent Crozier of the Mounted Police had wired,—"Troops must be largely reinforced; if half-breeds rise, Indians will join them." We heard later that Riel had an army of 1,500 men and six American cannon. As it fortunately transpired, Riel had neither the men nor the cannon, and there was no extensive Indian rising. But there was ground for the more serious apprehensions. If Riel had gained any material successes after the engagement at Duck Lake, it might have been difficult to keep the Indians under control. As it was, Poundmaker's tribe attacked the fort and plundered the stores at Battleford, while Big Bear's braves massacred a group of settlers at Frog Lake, and burned and ravaged all along the North Saskatchewan. The first engagement of the troops under General Middleton was fought at Fish Creek on April 24th. The half-breeds were driven out of their rifle pits, and utterly routed. The loss among the federal troops was 6 killed and 40 wounded out of 350

actively engaged. On April 25th Battleford was relieved. On May 1st a stern engagement was fought with Poundmaker's Indians at Cut Knife Hill. The result was effective if not decisive. On May 2nd the relieving column reached Edmonton. From May 9th to May 12th the decisive battle was fought at Batoche with losses to the half-breeds of 51 killed and 173 wounded, as against losses of 8 killed and 43 wounded among General Middleton's forces. These movements were carried out under various officers, covered a wide extent of territory, and involved long and heavy marches by the police and volunteers engaged, and necessitated much endurance, hardship, and sacrifice. But the fall of Batoche and the capture of Riel practically ended the campaign. On May 24th Poundmaker and his Indians, with about 150 half-breeds, surrendered to General Middleton at Battleford. Big Bear, who fled north before Middleton, released his prisoners, and was finally captured on July 2nd in the neighbourhood of Carlton. At the close of the rebellion there were seventy-three prisoners in the hands of the Canadian authorities. Many of these were discharged and others acquitted. Jackson of Prince Albert, who had acted as Riel's secretary, was found to be insane and sent to the Selkirk Asylum, whence he escaped to the United States. Big Bear, Poundmaker, and various Indians and half-breeds who had been active in the insurrection, were sentenced to fitting terms of imprisonment.

Eight of the Indians convicted of the murders at Frog Lake and elsewhere, were hanged at Battleford. Three who had received death sentences escaped with life imprisonment.

Riel was indicted for high treason, tried at Regina, and found guilty. The plea of insanity set up by his counsel was not entertained. After the Court had received the verdict, one of the jurors intimated that he had been asked by his fellows to recommend the prisoner to the mercy of the Crown, and Mr. Justice Richardson, before whom he was tried, duly forwarded the recommendation to the federal authorities. Riel was sentenced to be hanged on September 18th, and on appeal taken to the Court of Queen's Bench of Manitoba, the judgment was confirmed. It was then sought to appeal to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, but leave to prosecute the appeal was denied. He was, however, reprieved from September 18th to October 16th, again to November 12th, and yet again to November 16th in order that his mental condition could be considered by medical experts. But at length all pleas, protests, and representations were exhausted, and with calmness and fortitude he met his death on the gallows in the yard of the Mounted Police Barracks at Regina.

The medical evidence discredited, or at least did not support the theory of insanity. Dr. Jukes, senior surgeon of the Mounted Police, who attended Riel during his imprisonment at Regina, said: "I cannot

escape the conviction that except on purely religious questions relating to what may be called divine mysteries, he was, when entrusted to my care, and still continues to be, sane and accountable for his actions. . . . I therefore record my opinion that, with the reservation above made, Riel is a sane, clear-headed, and accountable being before God and man." Dr. Valade, Government analyst of Ottawa, reported to the authorities that while Riel suffered under hallucinations on political and religious questions, on other points he was quite sensible; and Dr. Lavell, warden of Kingston Penitentiary concluded that although Riel held and expressed peculiar views as to religion and general government, he was an accountable being, and capable of distinguishing right from wrong. Dr. Wallace, superintendent of the Hamilton Asylum, in giving evidence at the trial, said he could distinguish no evidences of insanity, while Dr. Roy, of the Beauport Asylum, testified that Riel had been confined in that institution for nineteen months in 1877 and 1878, and that he was satisfied that his insanity had returned. Dr. Daniel Clark, superintendent of the Asylum for the Insane at Toronto, who also gave evidence at the trial, dealt at some length with Riel's mental condition in a letter published by the Toronto *Globe* a few weeks after the execution. He said:

"I spoke to some of the half-breeds who were in all his fights, and they said positively that Riel was apparently rational enough until the Duck Lake

fight, and that after the excitement of that fight he seemed to have changed entirely and become a religious fanatic; he organized no opposition, did no fighting, but was looked upon as inspired—running about with a crucifix and calling upon the Trinity for aid. The organizers of the avowed opposition were Dumont and Dumais. On the question of the previous history of Riel the defence was particularly weak in some strong points which would have told for Riel. There was evidence in existence of his having been committed legally to an asylum in Washington, also of his having been committed legally to Longue Pointe, Montreal, but no evidence was given except in the case of the Beauport asylum at Quebec. . . . My statement at the trial was to the effect that from the evidence I would consider him insane, but that I was not prepared to say so from my short examination. I watched him closely after this time during the trial, and had another interview with him. I heard him address the jury, and saw a number of letters he wrote, which he had no idea would be made public. All these examinations convinced me that had he been an obscure man there is not an asylum in Christendom but would have committed him on the evidence, and legally so; but because he had been the indirect cause of a deplorable outbreak, his mental condition became of secondary importance, as political exigencies arose paramount."[1]

[1] Toronto *Globe*, January 18th, 1885.

In a further communication to *The Globe* three days afterwards, he added: "I never dreamed that Riel would be executed, knowing so much uncertainty existed in respect to his mental state, and seeing that one specialist stated he was insane, and one swore to his insanity."

During the progress of the rebellion the Liberal party in the House of Commons acted with moderation and patriotism. Even in Quebec the agitation against the Government did not get quite out of hand. It was recognized that law and order must be vindicated, the safety of the Western settlers secured, and the Indians kept in subjection; and that under such circumstances to embarrass the Administration and turn the high court of Parliament into a forum for useless and dangerous agitation would be very like treason to the Confederation. But the moment the insurrection was put down, the Liberal leaders regained their freedom of action, and proceeded to establish the Government's responsibility for the outbreak, and to hold the guilty and neglectful Ministers to account.

In the Quebec Legislature a mischievous and premature resolution of censure on the federal authorities was offered during March, and was hotly debated while the French Canadian regiments were on their way to the front to aid in suppressing the revolt. This resolution declared that the Legislative Assembly had learned with the deepest regret of the unfortunate events which

had occurred in the North-West, but could not approve of the settlement of the disturbance by force of arms and bloodshed. It alleged that the rising was caused by failure to settle the equitable claims of the half-breeds and by the neglect and incapacity of the federal authorities. It held the Government to account for the blood which had been shed in the quarrel, and particularly denounced the culpable neglect of the Minister of the Interior and the incapacity of the Minister of Militia. It urged the Lieutenant Governor in Council to consider the advisability of recommending a vote of money to assist the families of the volunteers, and asked to have a copy of the address sent to the Secretary of State for the Dominion. Only fifteen out of fifty-six votes were cast for the resolution. But the division represented the political alliance between the provincial Government and the federal authorities rather than the sentiment of the Legislature or of the province. The tide of sympathy for Riel and the half-breeds rose steadily higher in Quebec, and soon swept all other issues into the back-ground. The provincial Government sought, and sought wisely, to avoid entanglement in the question, while many of the Liberal politicians and journals strove to excite the prejudices and inflame the passions of the people against the leaders of the Conservative party, alike in provincial and in federal politics, and to burn up all other issues in the popular wrath over the execution of Riel and the

Government's long and stubborn neglect of the western half-breeds.

Mr. Honoré Mercier was then the leader of the Liberal party in Quebec. No more brilliant figure has ever passed across the stage of Canadian politics. He was a man of great personal fascination, ardent, persuasive, bold and resolute. He could move and mould a Quebec audience to his will with a skill and power that even Mr. Chapleau never surpassed. In other days he could have made revolutions. In his less responsible moments there was even the hint of revolution in some of his more inflammatory appeals to the Quebec Nationalists. If he had used his great powers and engaging qualities to impose a moderate, conservative, and economical programme upon his province, he had gifts and capacities to serve Quebec and Canada which few of our statesmen have possessed. But he did not exercise that control over himself or his Administration which a proper recognition of his duties and responsibilities demanded; and consequently his ascendancy in Quebec was often a cause of uneasiness to the Liberals of the other provinces, while his ultimate political downfall and untimely death have all the aspects of a tragedy. It may be that like many other men of equal faults and follies he would have redeemed his career if he had lived, done useful and enduring work for his province and his country, and filled a more luminous chapter in Canadian history.

The execution of Riel was the signal for a

supreme attack upon Sir John Macdonald and his French Ministers, and for the precipitance of an agitation which absolutely revolutionized political conditions in Quebec. Two days before the death-sentence upon Riel was carried into effect, sixteen or seventeen of the French Conservative members of the House of Commons united in a telegram to Sir John Macdonald in which they declared that, "Under the circumstances, the execution of Louis Riel would be an act of cruelty, for which we decline to be responsible." There is no doubt that up to this time the agitation among the Conservatives of Quebec was secretly encouraged by the French Ministers at Ottawa, who hoped through pressure of Quebec opinion to save Riel from the gallows. A few days after Riel's death a great meeting was held on the Champ de Mars at Montreal, at which speeches were made in strenuous denunciation of the execution, and in terms of unmeasured condemnation of the federal Government. Among the speakers were Mr. Laurier and Mr. Mercier, as representing the Liberal party, and Mr. C. J. Coursol and Mr. Alphonse Desjardins, both supporters hitherto of Sir John Macdonald, and influential leaders in the Conservative party of Quebec. The resolutions which the great meeting adopted with wild enthusiasm declared that the half-breeds, both French and English, had grievances which were the occasion of the political offence for which their chief was executed;

that civilized nations had practically abandoned capital punishment for political offences; that Riel had been recommended to the clemency of the court by jurymen of a different race and creed from his own, and therefore clemency should have been exercised; that as three respites had been granted and the execution thrice postponed, this duty became all the more imperative; that the Government had made of the execution a simple subject of election calculations, and had coolly computed how many seats would be won by hanging Riel, and how many lost by a policy of clemency and justice; that in giving effect to its calculations it had sacrificed Riel to the hatred of fanatics and allowed them to stir up against one another the different races who in this country lived together under the protection of the British flag; that in executing Riel the Government of Sir John Macdonald had committed an act of inhumanity and cruelty unworthy of a civilized nation, and deserved the condemnation of all friends of right and justice without distinction of race or religion; that the consent given by Sir Hector Langevin, Sir Adolphe Caron, and Mr. Chapleau to the execution constituted a betrayal of their trust, and specially deserved the reprobation of all the citizens of Quebec; that it had become the duty of the electors of each constituency to exact from its representative in the House of Commons a formal pledge to defeat the Government of Sir John Macdonald by every

constitutional means at their command; and that the circumstances demanded that all divisions of political parties, of races, and of creeds be put aside, and that all men who were so disposed, whatever might have been their former differences of opinion, should unite to accomplish the objects set forth in the resolutions,—in other words, to overthrow the Macdonald Government.

These resolutions were adopted by many municipal councils and many public meetings throughout Quebec, and naturally the inflammatory utterances of the press and of many of the politicians of the French province nourished the counter-agitation in Ontario. For a time all that was done for national consolidation by the blood and sacrifice of the soldiers on the plains of the West, threatened to be undone by the warfare of the politicians and the intense racial antagonisms which the situation developed. The Toronto *Mail* gave energetic voice to the dominant opinion of Ontario. In a series of striking and vehement articles it squarely and defiantly challenged the position of the politicians of Quebec. It even declared that it would be better that Confederation should be smashed into its original fragments than that the country should eternally submit to the dictation of the French province.[1]

[1] We challenge the press of Quebec and Montreal to point to a wrong wittingly done, or to name any country in the wide world where the rights of a minority have been more conscientiously respected. As this is a time for the plainest speaking, let us add that the sincere desire of the English provinces to do right by Lower Canada has undoubtedly

Naturally *The Mail's* utterances added fuel to the agitation in Quebec, and as it was regarded as the chief mouthpiece of the Government, its attitude was resented by the French-speaking members of the Cabinet, and it is believed was even severely disapproved and discouraged by Sir John Macdonald. It is impossible to know all the facts that led to the estrangement between *The Mail* and the Conservative leader, but there is at least no doubt that from this time dated the misunderstanding which was not healed while the old Conservative statesman lived. *The Mail* stood its ground without flinching, passed by calculated stages into the field of independent journalism, and remained an influential factor in the public life of the country.

The great majority of the Liberal journals and politicians of Ontario were slow to demand the commutation of Riel's sentence, and distinctly hesitated to condemn the execution. It is perhaps not

hampered their material progress. The English-speaking majority in the United States would never have tolerated the demands which the British portion of Canada has cheerfully complied with, much less submitted to the maintenance of those peculiar institutions which British Canada has fostered as though they had been her own. Yet after all our efforts to establish amicable relations with them, even at the sacrifice of prosperity, the French Canadians are now seeking to compel us to recognize their right to suspend the operation of the law whenever a representative of their race is in the toils. But let us solemnly assure them again that, rather than submit to such a yoke, Ontario would smash Confederation into its original fragments, preferring that the dream of a united Canada should be shattered forever, than that unity should be purchased at the price of equality.—Editorial in the Toronto *Mail*, November 23rd, 1885.

uncharitable to suggest that if his life had been spared the Ministers would have had to meet an attack in Ontario hardly less violent than that which the execution brought down upon their heads in Quebec. In fact, some of the Liberal papers demanded the execution which they subsequently condemned. In some of its phases there is no uglier chapter in our political history. There was overwhelming evidence to prove the Government's responsibility for the rebellion. But Riel was a poor and sordid figure to set in the forefront of the agitation, while the violence of the attack in Quebec reacted to the advantage of the Government in the other provinces. The country did not forget that Mr. Blake had offered a reward for the punishment of Scott's murderers, that in past times Riel had been treated with great leniency, that he had become an American citizen, and had ceased to be a legitimate participant in the grievances of the Metis. In fact, Riel's leadership of the revolt prejudiced public opinion against the half-breeds, and the defence of his record and personality by the Quebec nationalists could not command the hearty assent of the masses of the English-speaking people.

Nor can it be thought that the Liberal party occupied strong ground in seeking to prove that Riel was insane. He was equal to the leadership of the insurrection, and therefore fairly amenable to the consequences of his action. It is true that his behaviour in court at Regina was eccentric, that

his addresses to the court in his own defence, which the judge permitted, were disconnected, illogical, pompous, and puerile, that he claimed to be "the prophet of the new world," that he had used wild threats against the Canadian authorities, that he had manifested extraordinary religious vagaries, and composed rhapsodical rubbish in prose and verse of mysterious purpose and texture. But the evidences of insanity were not obtrusive until his neck was in danger, and hardly survived the conviction that his sentence would not be finally commuted. Riel, in fact, was much more blameworthy than the Metis who followed him into revolt, and the Liberals would have done well if they had set him in the background, refused to make him the central figure of a separate issue, and confined their attack to the Government's callous and persistent neglect to remedy the admitted grievances of the Western half-breeds.

Mr. Blake was in Europe when Riel was executed, and for some time afterwards. There was profound interest, and even some anxiety, as to the pronouncement he would make on the execution, and the agitation which that event had developed in the Province of Quebec. His first utterance on these questions was made at London on January 14th, 1886. He told the country that he did not propose to construct a political platform out of the Regina scaffold, or to create or cement party ties with the blood of the condemned. Other

features of his address, however, made it plain that he was disposed to raise the question of Riel's mental condition, and also challenge the wisdom and justice of the execution. He deprecated inflammatory agitation either in Ontario or Quebec, and said: "I hope and trust that the excitement having somewhat abated, the further discussion in the press and among the people may be more tranquil, that rash and hasty language may be avoided, and that when we meet in Parliament we may engage in the debate in a temper and after a fashion suitable to our national dignity and regardful of our national unity."

In the closing weeks of the session of 1885, Mr. Blake had brought on a motion in Parliament condemnatory of the Government's administration of North-West affairs, and it is not too much to say that the country was deeply impressed by the strength and completeness of the indictment. Mr. Blake's parliamentary career furnishes no better illustration of his grasp and thoroughness, and Mr. Laurier excelled even his chief in his eloquent, resourceful, and masterly arraignment of the Government. On July 6th, Mr. Blake had moved, "That in the administration of North-West affairs by the present Government, prior to the recent outbreak, there have occurred grave instances of neglect, delay, and mismanagement in matters affecting the peace, welfare, and good government of the country." Mr. Laurier spoke in the debate in reply to Sir John Macdonald. He produced overwhelming

evidence to prove that for years the Government had been deaf to all petitions and remonstrances in behalf of the half-breeds, that their homes were invaded—not accidentally, but deliberately—under the policy of the Government for the survey of the country, and that even men who had settled on their lands before the country was transferred to Canada had lines run across their fields, splitting up farms and fields, putting the fields on one side and the buildings on the other, and yet "delegation after delegation to this Government for redress had been constantly refused redress." He argued that Riel would have been impotent for mischief if the half-breeds had not had deep-seated and long-felt grievances. He proved his point by a noble and eloquent reference to Papineau. He described Papineau's wonderful power over the people of Quebec during the struggle for responsible government, and then showed how ineffective was his agitation for the repeal of the Act of Union when the grievances of the French Canadians had been redressed.

Mr. Laurier's speech on this occasion is a conspicuous and characteristic example of his oratory. The extract we quote, fine as it is, is scarcely above the level of the whole speech: "Few men have there been anywhere who have wielded greater sway over their fellow-countrymen than did Mr. Papineau at a certain time in the history of Lower Canada, and no man ever lived who had been more

profusely endowed by nature to be the idol of a nation. A man of commanding presence, of majestic countenance, of impassioned eloquence, of unblemished character, of pure, disinterested patriotism, for years and years he held over the hearts of his fellow countrymen almost unbounded sway, and even to this day the mention of his name will arouse throughout the length and breadth of Lower Canada a thrill of enthusiasm in the breasts of all, men or women, old or young. What was the secret of that great power he held at one time? Was it simply his eloquence, his commanding intellect, or even his pure patriotism? No doubt they all contributed; but the main cause of his authority over his fellow countrymen was this, that at that time they were an oppressed race and he was the champion of their cause. But when the day of relief came, the influence of Mr. Papineau, however great it might have been and however great it still remained, ceased to be paramount."

Mr. Laurier examined into the causes of the rebellion of 1869, and showed that then the half-breeds had complained, first, that Canada had taken possession of their country without respect for their rights as a people, and secondly, that by the system of survey the Government had invaded their actual possessions and properties. He declared that Ministers had learned nothing from the deplorable events of that period, and now by neglect, indifference, and incurable obduracy had caused an uprising on the

Saskatchewan. He met the charge that the Mackenzie Government was equally indifferent to the claims of the Western half-breeds by showing that Mr. Laird, who was appointed Lieutenant-Governor of the Territories by that Government, did not reach Battleford until 1877, and that in response to petitions his Council recommended: "That in view of the fact that grants of land and issues of scrip were made to the half-breeds of Manitoba toward the extinguishment of the Indian title to the lands of that province, there will be general dissatisfaction among the half-breeds of the Territories unless they receive some like consideration." He pointed out that the fall of the Mackenzie Government made it impossible for Liberal Ministers to give effect to this policy, and that in 1879 the Government still in office took power, and power which it failed to exercise, to deal with the half-breeds after the manner suggested by Mr. Laird and the North-West Council. He recalled the advice of Archbishop Taché, and declared that in face of all the evidence, it was his opinion that Sir John Macdonald had refused to act because he was opposed in principle and in practice to the extinguishment of the Indian title in so far as it was vested in the half-breeds. The policy of the Statute book, however, was that the half-breeds were entitled just as much as the Indians to the extinguishment of the Indian title, although as white men they were empowered to take compensation individually instead of collectively.

The Government would yield nothing except upon compulsion. Four days after the fight at Duck Lake, Ministers came down with an order-in-council proposing to grant lands to the half-breeds, not, however, in extinguishment of the Indian title, but with conditions of settlement. Commissioners were forthwith appointed and sent out to the disturbed districts; and when they advised that conditions of settlement should not be exacted, but that special grants should be made, as in the case of the Manitoba half-breeds, the Government finally surrendered and conceded to violence what it would not yield to prayers, petitions, and proper constitutional agitation.

It was so also in the case of those half-breeds who had not been enumerated in Manitoba, but claimed the right, and doubtless had the right, to special land grants. They had petitioned the Government, the North-West Council had petitioned the Government in their behalf, and friends of the Government in the West had petitioned, and all without avail. But when rebellion broke out on the Saskatchewan, Ministers came to their knees, and again conceded to violence what they would not concede to respectful petitions and legitimate representations. The Government, Mr. Laurier remarked, had not even the courage of Falstaff, who said, "Were reasons as plentiful as berries I would not give a reason upon compulsion."

He came next to the claim of the half-breeds

that they should not be disturbed in their holdings, and pointed out that it was the world-wide and immemorial custom of the French people to divide their lands into narrow strips, and to live as close to one another as the circumstances of the country would allow. This was the fashion adopted by the half-breeds of the Saskatchewan, and he showed that in a letter to the Lieutenant-Governor of the Territories in 1877, the Hon. David Mills, then Minister of the Interior, had said: "The programme of the special survey-party provides for the work being extended during the coming season to intersect the Saskatchewan in the vicinity of the principal settlements on that river. It is proposed in all cases where settlements have been formed along the rivers in the territory, to adapt the surveys to the farms as existing, that is to say, giving a frontage often of twenty chains on the river, and running the lots back so as to give 160 acres." This was to recognize the form of the half-breed holdings and avoid forcing the rectangular survey upon communities which had laid out their farms and established their homes after the traditional fashion of the French people. This policy was reversed by the Conservative Government, and the system substituted therefor was resolutely pursued in spite of petitions and remonstrances from the half-breeds, and even from agents of the Administration. The tyranny was still practised and justice still refused. He declared that it was not against the Queen but against the

tyranny of the Canadian Government that the half-breeds had rebelled, and he concluded: "This I say, and I say it coming from a province where, less than fifty years ago, every man of the race to which I belong was a rebel, and where to-day every man of that race is a true and loyal subject, as true and as loyal as any that breathes,—I say, give these men justice, give them freedom, give them their rights, treat them as for the last forty years you have treated the people of Lower Canada, and by and by, throughout those territories you will have contentment, peace, and harmony, where to-day discord, hatred, and war are ruining the land."[1] This was able and eloquent advocacy, and it can hardly be doubted that the case which Mr. Laurier made out against the Administration was conclusive and even overwhelming.

During the session of 1886, Mr. Landry, the Conservative member for Montmagny, moved, "That this House feels it its duty to express its deep regret that the sentence of death passed upon Louis Riel convicted of high treason, was allowed to be carried into execution." In amendment Sir Hector Langevin moved that the question be now put. Mr. Landry protested his good faith, but the object of the manœuvre was very apparent. The member for Montmagny acted in the interest if not at the direct instigation of the Government. It was well understood that upon the question of the justice

[1] Hansard, July 7th, 1885.

and expediency of Riel's execution there was great diversity of opinion among Liberals, while they were absolutely united upon the question of the Government's responsibility for the insurrection. It was therefore important that the Landry motion should not be amended, and that the Liberal members of the House should be forced squarely to condemn or approve Riel's execution. This purpose was accomplished by Sir Hector Langevin's amendment, which under the rules of Parliament shut out any further amendment, and thus enabled the Government to frame the indictment and narrow the issue to the single question of the execution.

Mr. Laurier contributed to this debate one of the most brilliant and powerful addresses he has ever delivered. It is a keen and searching analysis of the Government's dealings with the half-breeds, and a stern arraignment of the fatuity, stupidity, and inhumanity of its Western policy from the first unwise rejection of the petitions of the Metis down to the execution of the leader of the insurrection. Mr. Laurier took occasion in this speech to protest against the attacks of some of the Conservative journals of Ontario upon the French people of Quebec. It was not true, he said, that "it was the present intention of the French Canadian leaders to organize a purely French Canadian party, to lay aside all party ties, and to have no other bonds of party in this House but the tie of race. I protest against any such assertion. It is

calculated to do harm. It is not founded on truth. It would be simply suicidal to French Canadians to form a party by themselves. Why, so soon as French Canadians, who are in the minority in this House and in the country, were to organize as a political party, they would compel the majority to organize as a political party, and the result must be disastrous to themselves. We have only one way of organizing parties. The country must be governed and can be governed simply on questions of policy and administration, and French Canadians who have had any part in this movement have never had any other intention but to organize upon those party distinctions and upon no other."[1]

This was what he had said ten years before when the Conservative leaders were striving to organize the Catholics of Quebec into a solid party; this is what he said ten years later when his co-religionists and compatriots in Quebec were asked to condemn his attitude on the Manitoba school question; and this is the language he has uttered at every crisis in the history of Confederation in which considerations of race and creed have inflamed the public temper, obscured the public judgment, and threatened the disruption of the Confederation. But he could not escape the responsibility for intemperate utterances in Quebec any more than Sir John Macdonald could quite evade responsibility for

[1] Hansard, March 16th, 1886, page 175.

intemperate utterances in Ontario. In Quebec the Conservative leader had to take the consequences of the general character of the agitation in the chief English province, just as Mr. Blake and Mr. Laurier had to take the consequences of the general character of the agitation in French Canada. Free speech and a free press are still the very bulwarks of British institutions, but sometimes these great agencies of freedom and progress make the work of responsible statesmen exceedingly onerous and difficult.

Dealing with the disputed question of Riel's sanity, Mr. Laurier said: "That he was insane seems to me beyond the possibility of controversy. When the reports first came last spring and in the early summer of his doings and sayings in the North-West, when we heard that he was to establish monarchies in the North-West, that he was to depose the Pope and establish an American pope, those who did not know him believed he was an impostor, but those who knew him knew at once what was the matter with him. In the Province of Quebec there was not an instant's hesitation about it. Almost every man in that province knew that he had been several times confined in asylums, and therefore it was manifest to the people of Quebec that he had fallen into one of those misfortunes with which he was afflicted. When his counsel were engaged, and commenced to prepare for his trial, they saw at once that if justice to him, and

only justice to him was to be done, their plea should be a plea of insanity." He argued, as he had argued on many other occasions, that for this and other reasons the recommendation to mercy should have been respected, and that considerations outside the events on the Saskatchewan should not have influenced the Government. "The death of Scott," he said, "is the cause of the death of Riel to-day;" and touching the murder of Scott he observed: "I must say that I have always held the view that it was one of the most painful tragedies that has ever occurred in the life of any country; it is one of those acts for which there could be no possible excuse, unless the excuse we now have that the man's mind was unsound." He insisted, however, that it was now too late to punish Riel for that offence, and that the events of 1870 could not now be used to justify the course of the Government. He told the House that he could not look upon Riel as a hero. "At his worst he was a fit subject for an asylum; at his best he was a religious and political monomaniac." He quoted freely from notable historical examples to prove the unwisdom of political executions, urged the speedy release of rebels still confined in North-West prisons, insisted that the substantial reforms conceded by the Government were ample vindication of Riel and his associates, and declared, "Their country has conquered with their martyrdom, and if we look at that one fact alone there was cause sufficient, independent

of all others, to extend mercy to the one who is dead and to those who live."[1]

The speech made a deep impression upon Parliament and the country. Even Ministers who combatted his arguments and rejected his conclusions bore tribute to the charm, the eloquence, the dignity, and the power of the address.[2] The Hon. Thos. White, then Minister of the Interior, said: "I think it is a matter of common pride to us that any public man in Canada can make, on the floor of Parliament, such a speech as we listened to last night."[3] Sir Adolphe Caron said: "I think I am expressing the opinion of all my friends, which opinion has already been expressed by my honourable colleague, the Minister of the Interior, in saying that we all feel proud in having as a member of this House the honourable member for Quebec East in view of the speeeh which he made last night. It was a speech of which I believe I am safe in saying any Parliament could be proud, and in

[1] Hansard, March 16th, 1886, pages 175 to 185.

[2] We intend no hyperbole, no exaggerated assertion, in saying that if Mr. Laurier's noble speech of Monday night had been delivered before a congregation of the Orange Lodges of Ontario, he would have captured the approbation of his hearers. In saying so we do bare justice to the Orangemen. They are often bigoted and narrow, and generally intolerant. They cherish memories of old hates. Their fantastic devotion to what they define as "loyalty" often leads them astray. But they have free-born hearts that thrill to the recollections of the glorious days when the founders of their order stood in battle array for liberty, and helped to beat down forever the doctrine of non-resistance to tyranny.—Editorial in Toronto *Globe*, March 18th, 1886.

[3] Hansard, 1886, page 191.

discussing the question which to him, coming from the Province of Quebec, as to me coming from the same province, is one certainly which must have appealed to his feelings, as he showed it did during the delivery of that speech—I say he has conducted the discussion in such a way as I hope will have a beneficial effect upon the whole debate."[1] The Hon. Edward Blake added this hearty tribute to the brilliant performance of his deskmate: "I agree in the observation which was thrown out from the opposite side of the House the other day as to the general tone and temper of the debate so far; and I hailed with extreme pleasure the courteous and kindly compliments which were paid to my honourable friend beside me by two of the Ministers, on his speech of the other evening. It is to my mind the crowning proof of French domination. My honourable friend, not content with having for this long time in his own tongue borne away the palm of Parliamentary eloquence, has invaded ours, and in that field has pronounced a speech, which in my humble judgment, merits this compliment, because it is the truth, that it was the finest parliamentary speech ever pronounced in the Parliament of Canada since Confederation."[2]

Mr. Laurier bore an arduous part in the campaign which preceded the general election of 1887. He addressed tumultuous and excited meetings all

[1] Hansard, 1886, page 195.

[2] Hansard, 1886, page 237.

over the Province of Quebec, and spoke with Mr. Blake at Toronto, London, Windsor, and Peterborough, in the Province of Ontario. There were hostile demonstrations at the London meeting, and an unfriendly element invaded the meeting at Toronto. But it was hard to resist the courtesy, the patience, the manly bearing and resolute temper of the eloquent leader of the French Liberals. On both occasions he won at last a sympathetic hearing, and boldly addressed to his audiences every argument in mitigation of the conduct of the half-breeds of the West, and in condemnation of the Government, that he had used in Quebec and in Parliament. It was at Toronto that he said: "We have learned to love British institutions, because in British institutions we have found more freedom than we could have had as subjects of France; and how many times in that grand old city which I have the honour to represent, looking at the banner of St. George waving over her proud citadel, how many times have I said to myself that that flag represented the defeat of my ancestors, but at the same time recalled the thought that it was the flag the most precious to the human race, the flag of liberty." He knew that French Canadians were reproached with having kept their individuality as a race, and on that account it was charged that they were "wanting in loyalty." "But," he said, "I fail to see the justice of the reproach. I admit that we retain our language, our religion, and our characteristics,

but I cannot see the justice of the reproach; and more, it seems to me that we would not have been worthy of any esteem, or of the name of French Canadians, if we had not kept sacred the memories of our forefathers. So I repeat, I love England, I honour and esteem English institutions. I do not regret that we are now subjects of the Queen instead of France, but may my right hand wither at my side if the memories of my forefathers ever cease to be dear to my heart." He added: "I am of French origin and have the pride of my race; in politics I am an English Liberal. The principles which I profess are the outgrowth of study and reflection, and did not come to me from the land of my ancestors. They came to me from England, from the great mother of modern liberty. I belong to the school of those men who fill the pages of English history, who always faced the great to get the right. I belong to the school of Hampden and Pym, of Russell and Somers and of Burke, and of one who did not hesitate, we read, on one occasion, to say to the Ministers of the Crown that they had not behaved as they should have towards the colonies which were then in rebellion, and to say that they had provoked that rebellion, just as Ministers since have provoked a rebellion."[1]

Mr. Blake said at London that he would not seek to make the execution of Riel a party question.

[1] Speech at Toronto, December 10th, 1886.

But in the constituencies, if not in Parliament, a party must accept responsibility for the policy of its leaders. It is rarely that an independent vote brings strength to an individual representative. Before the country the Liberal party stood committed to Mr. Blake's position on the rebellion and on the execution. The Government's responsibility for the revolt was established to the satisfaction of the great body of Liberals in all the provinces. But in so far as Riel was concerned, whether the fact be ascribed to prejudice or to deliberate, independent, patriotic reasoning, it is still true that the mass of Liberals in the English speaking provinces secretly sanctioned, if they did not openly applaud, the execution. Mr. Mackenzie and Sir Richard Cartwright were not persuaded that the execution was a mistake, and in Quebec Mr. Joly resigned his seat in the Legislature in protest against the more extreme features of the agitation maintained by Mr. Mercier and his associates.[1]

It is hard to think that the events of the North-West Rebellion constituted legitimate issues in the local politics of Quebec, any more than that the murder of Scott was a proper question to introduce

[1] Landry's motion condemning the execution of Riel was defeated by 146 to 52. Twenty-four English-speaking Reformers voted with the majority and against Mr. Blake and Mr. Laurier. Fifteen of these belonged to Ontario, and among them were Alexander Mackenzie, Sir Richard Cartwright, John Charlton, James Sutherland, William Paterson, Thos. Bain and William Mulock. Only one English-speaking representative from Quebec voted for the motion.

into the local politics of Ontario. But Mr. Mercier deliberately elevated these issues above all other questions of public policy, overthrew the provincial Conservative Government, and up to the hour of his dismissal from office in 1891, maintained his alliance with the Conservative Nationalists, by whom he was enabled to accomplish this result. In the field of federal affairs, where the issues by which Mr. Mercier profited were wholly legitimate, Mr. Blake was less fortunate, and even in Quebec the candidates of Mr. Blake and Mr. Laurier received much less support than the candidates of Mr. Mercier. The truth is that Mr. Blake and Mr. Laurier were constitutional statesmen and unequal to a policy of immoderation on any serious public question. Altogether, the Liberal party of the Dominion reaped no substantial benefit from the Government's deplorable mismanagement of North-West affairs, and the agitation which swept Mr. Mercier into office. That agitation weakened Mr. Blake and Mr. Laurier in the English-speaking counties, while the Catholic bishops, who afterwards maintained very cordial relations with Mr. Mercier, manifested small sympathy with the movement against Sir John Macdonald, and exercised upon the whole a restraining and moderating influence. It is true that many of the former supporters of Sir John Macdonald were elected in Quebec on the platform of the Opposition, but when they had secured their seats and the Government had again

carried the country, they dropped back into their old party relationships. Sir John Macdonald remained the past-master in the science of party management.

The Irish Catholics of Ontario were not greatly influenced by the agitation in Quebec, nor even by Mr. Blake's energetic advocacy of the cause of Home Rule for Ireland. There has seldom been any firm alliance between the French Canadians of Quebec and the Irish Catholic element of Canada. This is probably due, in some measure to a singular social and racial antipathy, and perhaps also in lesser degree to the appointment of French bishops to Irish dioceses, and the establishment of French priests in Irish parishes. It is no secret that the Irish element feel that the French section of the Church enjoys an undue share of clerical patronage, and that the effect upon the relationships of Irish Catholics and French Canadians is not always salutary. In the main, Sir John Macdonald's treatment of the Irish Catholic minority, as also of the French Canadians, was generous and conciliatory, and hence French Canadian and Irish Catholic Conservatives were not easily detached from his standard. It is due to this fact as much as to the Franchise Act and the timely distribution of a heavy campaign fund, that he was not beaten in 1887. If judgment had been delivered upon the merits of his policy and administration in the North-West, not all the fiery eloquence of Mr. Chapleau

in Quebec, nor all the solid legal skill of Sir John Thompson in Parliament and on the platform, nor even his own bluff, bold, and reminiscent appeals to the constituencies he knew so well, could have turned aside the nation's displeasure, and saved his Ministry from decisive defeat.[1]

[1] Morgan's *Annual Register* for 1885 has an excellent chapter on the North-West Rebellion.

OF ST. JOHN THE APOSTLE

BIBLIOTHEQUE
Junior
Sec. I - Can. 8 - No. 82

BIBLIOTHEQUE

BIBLIOTEQUE
du
Juniorat
Sec.L-Rayon.6-No.62